

# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

Published quarterly by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference. **Editors:** John C. Wenger, Goshen, Indiana and Melvin Gingerich, North Newton, Kansas. **Associate Editors:** S. F. Coffman, H. S. Bender, J. B. Smith, C. Z. Mast, J. C. Clemens, Ira D. Landis, Paul Erb and H. A. Brunk. **Office Editor:** Paul Erb. **Publication Office:** Scottsdale, Pennsylvania.

Vol. VII

MARCH, 1946

No. 1

## Brief Sketch of the Life and Work of J. D. Brunk

MARY BERKMAN

March 13, 1872, mark the birth date of John David Brunk, whose name will live on in the history of the Mennonite Church. John D. Brunk was born near Harrisonburg, Virginia, and spent most of his childhood in that vicinity. As a boy he had always dreamed of working with music, and even as a very young child, his keen interest centered about that art.

At the age of sixteen he accepted Christ and united with the Weaver Mennonite Church, remaining an active member his entire life. On September 2, 1897, he was united in marriage to Mary Kate Martin of near Hagerstown, Maryland, and to this union were born eight children: Salome, 1898; Harry Samuel, 1899; Carreño, 1901; Hermione, 1903; John Milton, 1904; Niemann Artler, 1906; Fannie Susan, 1908; and Mary Elizabeth, 1913.

When Elkhart Institute opened its music department in 1895, J. S. Coffman asked Brunk to come to Elkhart to head the department; but since he had not finished his academy work at that time Brunk felt that he was not prepared for the work. That same year he completed his work at the West Central Academy, Mt. Clinton, Virginia, and the following winter he attended the New England Conservatory at Boston.

In 1897, the year of his marriage, he moved to Mt. Clinton where he taught at the West Central Academy for three years. The five years that followed were spent as head of the piano department at a Brethren institution, Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, Va. The winter of 1905 was spent at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, and in the fall of 1906, he came to Goshen College to head the music department, making at this point a definite beginning in his work for the Mennonite Church. In spite of the fact that his accomplishments insured a great future outside the Church, he happily came to Goshen, for he believed that God's plan for his life was to work for the Church and to acquaint her people, especially her young people, with better music, so that the next generation would have passed on to them a keener type of appreciation. He felt that some of the music often sung completely destroyed the spirit of the church service. "Good music," he said, "is a voice of the soul and through music we can praise and worship God 'in Spirit and in truth' if the hymns we sing come from the soul and not from swinging

turn to col. 1, page 3



JOHN D. BRUNK, 1872-1926  
As he appeared in 1904

## Harmonia Sacra Exhibition in Virginia

H. A. BRUNK

The forty-fourth annual old folks' singing was held at the Weaver Church near Harrisonburg, Virginia, on New Year's Day, 1946. In the morning session the moderators, J. D. Hartman and J. A. Brunk, called upon twenty-one song leaders to lead one song each from the HARMONIA SACRA. In the afternoon D. W. Lehman, Mahlon Blosser, H. D. Weaver, J. D. Golladay, Dr. J. D. Burkholder and Chester K. Lehman led the singing. A number of the more difficult selections including anthems and "minors" were sung.

A special feature of the meeting was an exhibition of old copies of editions of the HARMONIA SACRA. This was made possible through a publicity campaign put on by the editors of the Harrisonburg (Va.) DAILY NEWS RECORD at the request of the writer. The people who attended were asked to bring old and new editions of the HARMONIA SACRA. The results of the campaign were most gratifying.

The exhibition included two copies of the first edition, called GENUINE CHURCH MUSIC, published by Joseph turn to col 3, page 3

## The 1797 North Carolina Land Swindle

IRA D. LANDIS

Among copies of the Dutch Committee for Foreign Needs in the Historical Library of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, references now and then for over fifty years following 1709 mention in correspondence Mennonite brethren in Pennsylvania, Virginia and Carolina. The New Bern (N. C.) settlement in 1710 was practically wiped out by an Indian massacre, but the state has since been a place of small Mennonite and Amish settlements, yet none of lasting consequences. The document herewith might have tended in that direction IF. . . .

On July 20, 1777 by the Treaty of Long Island of Holston (now in Tennessee) by a surrender of state rights of both Virginia and North Carolina "to the general Government under the Act of Confederation and the adoption of the Constitution of the United States" the Cherokee Indians were given a reservation. "This hunting ground, occupancy, etc., was all west of the Blue Ridge in what is now North Carolina and a part of what is now Tennessee and which included among other lands the French Broad Valley." In 1778 the General Assembly of North Carolina ratified and confirmed the same and prohibited the entry and grant within the boundary reserved to the Cherokees."

In 1783 the State of North Carolina moved the Cherokee boundary from the top of the Blue Ridge west to Pigeon River. The Cherokees objected to the right of any state to limit their territory without their consent. This necessitated the Treaty of Hopewell of Nov. 28, 1785. By this treaty the Cherokees were permitted to murder any whites in their territory and the "Cherokees accordingly murdered many whites." "Citizens of the United States or persons other than Indians who settle or attempt to settle on lands west or south of said boundary and refuse to remove within six months after ratification of this treaty do forfeit the protection of the United States, and the Indians (are privileged) to punish them or not, as they please." Section six of the 1783 treaty was declared valid by the North Carolina Assembly of 1809, the State Supreme court, Strother vs., Cathey 1807, and the United States Supreme Court in the famous Latimer vs., Poteet suit of 1840. Disregarding the treaty, Governor Ashe of North Carolina gave a grant on April 3, 1797 for 200,960 acres of Cherokee Indian lands to Haldiman and Eshleman of Lancaster County.



It was a large part of Jackson, Swain and Macon Counties, then Buncombe, drained by the Little Tennessee River. This deed for Grant 279 is found, in spite of the Asheville Civil War fire, in Records of Buncombe County, Deed Book S2-2 P 421 and Lancaster County Court House, Deed in Trust Book I, pp. 224-227.

Lancaster County Mennonites had lands not only at home, but in Virginia and elsewhere. This was only seven and ten years before they received the large grants in Ontario. This scheme to interest Lancaster County capital in a big way was sponsored by John Haldiman, a Donegal yeoman, who had lands also in the Hempfields and Jacob Eshleman, Jr., of Strasburg. Eshleman was married to Barbara, daughter of Jacob Groff, and was a farmer also.

The document including many prominent Mennonites of the Lampeter, Conestoga and Manor Townships follows:

John Haldiman, et al.  
to

Abraham Witmer, et al.

To all people to whom these presents shall come, John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman, both of the County of Lancaster and State of Pennsylvania, send Greetings. Whereas the State of North Carolina by letters Patent under the hand of Samuel Ashe, Esquire, Governor, and the great seal of the same State dated the third day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety seven for the consideration therein mentioned, did give and grant unto the said John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman, a certain tract of land containing two hundred thousand nine hundred and sixty acres, lying and being in the County of Buncombe on the waters of the Tennessee, Tuckasuge [Tuckasegee] and Nantahale [Nantahala] Rivers, all waters of the Tennessee (in the said state of North Carolina). BEGINNING at a white oak, locust and hickory at a small spring, about thirty poles from the Unantele Creek and on the north side of the said creek, running north fifteen degrees West eight thousand one hundred poles bounded by a mountain to Tuckasuge River, crossing same at or joining Cathcart's lands to a white oak. Thence south seventy five degrees West four thousand poles to a Poplar crossing Tennessee River and along Andrew Beard's Land; thence South fifteen degrees East four thousand poles to two white oaks; thence North fifteen degrees West seven hundred poles to place of Beginning, as by plot thereto annexed doth appear, together with all woods, waters, inesm, minerals, hereditaments and appurtenances to the said land belonging or appertaining. To hold to the said John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman, their heirs and assigns forever as in and by said letters patent registered in Register's Office in Buncombe County in Book 2, p. 421. Reference thereto being had will more fully and at large appear. Now know ye that the said recited patent was so made and taken to and in names of them, the said John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman and the said described tract of land with the appurtenances was so grant-

ed unto them, in trust to and for the proper benefits and behoof of them the said John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman and the several persons hereinafter named, all of the said County of Lancaster and their several and respective heirs and assigns forever as tenants in common and not as joint tenants according to the several parts, shares and quantities and numbers of acres hereinafter specified (being in undivided parts or shares of the whole tract of land aforesaid), that is to say six thousand acres thereof to and for the use and behoof of the said John Haldiman, his heirs and assigns forever. (Following the latter formula, the following men get the following acres:)

Jacob Eshleman	18000
Christian Herr, Sr.	1500 A.
Abraham Witmer	24000
John Leaman	3000
David Brubacher	3000
Martin Bear	3000
Benjamin Witmer, Jr.	3000
George Bressler	6000
George Ruth	3000
Abraham Buckwalter, Jr.	9000
John Buckwalter	3000
Abraham Breneman	4500
John Hambright	3000
Gotlieb Nauman	3000
Peter Miller	3000
Benjamin Witmer, Sr.	1500
Daniel Witmer	3000
Philip Gloninger	3000
John Brackbill	1500
Christian Herr	1500
Jacob Neff, Jr.	9000
Francis Kendig	1500
John Funk	3000
John Herr, Jr.	9000
Jacob Huber	2000
Christian Hauser	3000
Christian Brenneman	3000
Jacob Brenneman	6000
Andrew Bauman	3000
Jacob Greider	3000
Jacob Musser	9000
Peter Musser	6000
Christian Herr (Manor)	6000
John Herr (Manor)	6000
Abraham Herr (Manor)	3000
John Hurst	3000
John Musser	3000
James Boyd	3000
Wendel Bowman	3000
John W. Kittera and	
John Musser	9960
	200,960A.

And further they the said John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman do and each of them doth by their presents declare promise and agree that the survivor of them the said John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman shall and will at any time at and upon reasonable request and proportionate costs and charges of the several persons hereinbefore named, their respective heirs and assigns or of a majority of them duly make and execute any proper deed or deeds of conveyance and said tract of land with appurtenances unto such person or persons and as the said several persons hereinbefore named, their respective heirs and assigns or a majority of them shall direct and appoint who shall and will immediately thereupon

by endorsement or endorsements upon the back of such deed of conveyance duly regrant, reconvey and assure the aforesaid tract of land with the appurtenances unto the survivors of them, the said John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman and such other person or persons as they the said several persons hereinbefore named, their respective heirs and assigns or a majority of them, shall direct and appoint as joint tenants in trust nevertheless to and for the use and purposes hereinbefore expressed and declared. On witness whereof the said John Haldiman and Jacob Eshleman have hereunto set their hands and seals this sixth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety seven. Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of us.

Andrew Groff John Haldiman—His seal  
John Witmer Jacob Eshleman—His seal

On June 5, 1830 John Haldiman the only surviving Trustee appeared in the Lancaster Court House to have the above recorded. Id.

These forty one "legally secured land holders" of wild cat stock were among the most prosperous and influential Mennonites and ruralites of the county. Abraham Witmer built the first bridge of the the Conestoga at Bridgeport east of the city in 1788 and a permanent stone bridge in 1800 at his own expense. This practically ruined him and his brother Henry, "the Borough of Lancaster Gentleman." These two with Martin Bear, son of Minister Martin Bare, Benjamin Witmer, Sr., and Benjamin Witmer, Jr., were of great assistance to the Mellinger congregation in the early days. The Buckwalters and John Herr, Jr., of Wheatland Mills were not far away. George Bressler, John Brackbill, John Funk and Minister Jacob Neff, Jr., of Strasburg were among the Strasburg leaders. Jacob Huber, Christian Hauser and some of the Herrs were from the Brick. Wendel Bowman built the Emanuel Neff Mill between Strasburg and Lampeter. Three of the Herrs were in the Manor. Nauman was at one time in Manheim Township. David Brubaker was along Brubaker's Run east of Rohrerstown. Some I have not definitely located.

Most of the adjoining claims were contested as far as the United States Supreme Court, but since these were mostly Mennonites no such suit developed. How much money was lost, I have no way of learning. That none ever colonized it seems certain. George Bressler's children were scattered from central Pennsylvania to Ohio, but not in the North Carolina Cherokee Indian Reservation nor the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Most of the rest remained here. The name Whitmire (Witmer), Messers (Musser) and a few other names that might have a similarity to Mennonite names are found in Buncombe County to-day. The evidences at hand would lead us to believe that all was lost—of course, only money.

My observations are three-fold:

- (1) Invest at home where you can see it—not five hundred and more miles away.
- (2) Regardless of how good your friend is and how glowing his descrip-



tion and however prosperous the adventure, take the advice of Jesus (Lk. 14:18): See it before you buy, and clear the title before you pay.

(3) Always highly regard the advice of Mark Twain: "There are two classes of people who should never speculate: the man who can't afford it, and the man who can."

#### BRIEF SKETCH

*continued from col. 1, page 1*

rhythm." He felt that good hymns, each time they are sung, produce new thoughts, new inspiration, and new encouragements which the lighter, melodious, and jingling tunes never could give.

In working in the music department of Goshen College, J. D. Brunk had three definite aims: (1) To prepare for the conservatory those pupils who wished to go on in music. (2) To teach only the best of music, to show students the difference between good and poor music, to show that a knowledge of music was needed for a well-rounded education. And (3) To teach those who were not enrolled in his classes by bringing to the College each year two or more good artists, by presenting good programs by his choruses, and by carefully selecting hymns for chapel and church services. In 1913, Professor Brunk took a year's leave of absence because he needed a rest, and at the end of the year came one of the greatest disappointments of his life when he found he had to ask for another year's leave and thus sever his connection with the College.

In 1915 J. D. Brunk began going into different Mennonite communities to hold classes, thinking in this way he would be able to improve the church music. His hope was to improve the congregational singing, introduce the better types of hymns, and train choristers. By accomplishing these three things, he thought the Mennonite Church would push forward in worshipping through good music. In 1917 he found that he could not stay in this field any longer as the Church was not able to support it sufficiently to supply the needs of his family.

In our various Church song books we find many of John D. Brunk's hymns, and all are examples of the type of music which he wished to promote. The year 1902 marks the date of the beginning of his editorial work, for it was in this year that he edited the Mennonite CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMNAL. In 1911, the SUPPLEMENT to this hymnal was published, and the following year the book EDUCATIONAL VOCAL STUDIES went to press. LIFE SONGS was published in 1916, and his final edition was the new CHURCH HYMNAL, MENNONITE, that appeared in 1926.

In his publication work he aimed to separate the songs to be used in the Sunday School and Young People's Bible Meetings from those for the church service. He hoped the LIFE SONGS would be used in the former services and the CHURCH HYMNAL used in the latter.

On February 5, 1926, Brother Brunk

died, leaving to the Mennonite Church an ideal and standard for good music.

Some of John D. Brunk's music has not yet been published. With the assistance of J. W. Wayland of Harrisonburg, Virginia, he had produced the manuscript for a book of Gospel hymns entitled, SALVATION'S STORY, a series of hymns which covered the entire life of Jesus. He had bought from Professor Wayland the latter's interest in the proposed book and had prepared the manuscript for submission to a publisher. It was his untimely death which prevented the publication of this work, a book for which he had had good hope. The manuscript of SALVATION'S STORY is still the property of Brother Brunk's widow. She resides at 1109 South Main Street, Goshen, Indiana. It is to be hoped that this work may yet appear and be a means of blessing to the church.

#### Sustaining Members, 1945

The following have earned the right to recognition as sustaining members of Mennonite Historical Association for the year 1945. Sustaining members are those who pay five dollars or more. Regular dues are one dollar per year.

H. Harold Hartzler  
Harry A. Brunk  
Ira D. Landis  
Leroy S. Stoltzfus  
Floyd E. Kauffman  
J. M. Kreider  
John E. Sommers  
Orie O. Miller  
Samuel S. Wenger  
Mahlon A. Souder  
C. Warren Long  
Musser S. Herr

The money received from both regular and sustaining members is used for the work of the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference after the publication costs of the BULLETIN have been cared for.

#### Further Notes on Ordinations

ELI J. BONTREGER

It was really interesting to read the article, "Ordinations Among Mennonites." A few more instances of out-of-the-ordinary instances could have been included. In our Old Order [Amish] churches such as receive but one vote are not taken into the lot.

Christ E. Troyer was ordained when a young man at White Cloud, Michigan, without drawing the lot, having received all the votes save one. In 1940 at the age of 72 he was ordained bishop at Shipshewana, Indiana. However he ordained another to take his place a year later and died the same year. I myself was ordained to the ministry on May 13, 1894 with but four votes, and in 1901 was ordained bishop without drawing the lot, having received all the votes.

The late John T. Yoder of Thomas, Oklahoma, drew the lot seven times but always went free. Fernandis Miller drew

the lot the seventh time when it fell on him at the age of 53.

John E. Bontreger who died November 11, 1930 was ordained May 16, 1871. There were seven in the lot at that time, and all except one (the above-mentioned John T. Yoder) were ordained later.

#### Diary Entry of T. M. Erb on One of the Amish Mennonite Sleeping Preachers

Oct. 16, 1892.

"... Eve. to church. John D. Kauffman of Goshen, Ind., a sleeping preacher preached to us. Came there about 6 o'clock. Was very nervous and could hardly walk. Made a bed for him; laid down and soon fell in a trance, holding up one hand and the other stretched along his body. Lay that way nearly half an hour then prayed a short time in English. Then his attendants helped him up and he stood erect. Commenced to preach in German about ten minutes. Then fell down on his knees and prayed a short time, then got up and preached nearly an hour in German, then an hour in English, then about three quarters of an hour in German again. Then fell down and prayed a short time, then laid down. Church was then dismissed and he lay there, cold and stiff for about an hour and a half. Then said a few words and got awake. He just seemed as though he was getting out of a deep sleep. He preached on different subjects but dwelt mainly on the figure of Noah and the ark. Noah did just as the Lord commanded. So should we in all things."

#### HARMONIA SACRA

*continued from col. 2, p. 1*

Funk in 1832. These were contributed by J. J. Wenger of Harrisonburg and E. S. Miller of Fort Seybert, West Virginia. The collection also included a fourth edition published in 1847, contributed by W. C. Weaver of Dayton, Virginia; a fifth edition published in 1851; a sixth edition published in 1854, contributed by W. O. Moubray of Singers Glen, then Joseph Funk's home town; the ninth edition published in 1858, contributed by E. T. Miller of Fort Seybert, West Virginia; a tenth edition published in 1860, contributed by Mrs. Lizzie Meyers of Broadway, Virginia, and a thirteenth edition published in 1869.

In addition to the above we found that Mrs. C. A. Lee of Harrisonburg has a copy of the third edition, published in 1842.

We are happy to report that a majority of the above old editions have been placed in the Mennonite Historical Library at Eastern Mennonite School and in the Rockingham County Historical Library at Harrisonburg, Virginia.



## John Horsch on His Faith and Life

Scottsdale, Pa. November 25, 1927.

Professor John Theodore Mueller, Th.D.,  
Concordia Theological Seminary,  
St. Louis Mo.

My dear Professor Mueller:

Your kind letter of the 16th inst. is before me. I have carefully noted its contents and shall without apology attempt to answer your questions.

I was born almost exactly sixty years ago near Wuerzburg in Bavaria. My ancestors on both sides for many generations were Mennonites. My father and both grandfathers, also one of my great-grandfathers, were ministers (elders). I came to this country forty-one years ago to escape military service, having conscientious objections against it. In America I attended for about 3½ years Northwestern College, Naperville, Ill., German Wallace College, Berea, Ohio and the University of Wisconsin. For a number of years I was editor of the "Herold der Wahrheit," the German organ of the group of Mennonite churches with which I am connected. The publication of this paper was discontinued about 30 years ago. (The publishers were the Mennonite Publishing Company, Elkhart, Ind.) At Elkhart I was joined in marriage to Christina Funk. We have four children, all active church members. In 1908 the interests of the Mennonite Publishing Company were bought by the Mennonite Publication Board and the Mennonite Publishing House, of Scottsdale, Pa., was established by this Board. At that time I accepted a position of a general editorial nature with the Mennonite Publishing House. I have collected the comprehensive "Mennonite Historical Library" and a few months ago was appointed by the "Mennonite General Conference" to write a history of the Mennonite Church. The titles of the main books I have written are given on the title page of "Modern Religious Liberalism."

As concerns my doctrinal viewpoint I need not enlarge on the fundamental doctrines of the faith. Let me say that in point of my personal apprehension of the saving truth of the Gospel I was for many years groping in darkness in the attempt to work myself into a condition where I would be worthy of God's grace. I failed to realize my real condition and consequently failed to grasp the Gospel message. And then, as a young man, the reading of modernistic literature had a detrimental effect on my religious thinking but was at last led to see the emptiness and deceptiveness of liberalism. Only gradually I obtained light as to my real need and the essential truth of the Gospel. As regards my position on this all-important point I cannot do better than to refer you to Luther's "Was ist das?" on the second article of the creed in his Small Catechism. Outside of Scripture I have not found anything yet which for a short statement is quite as satisfactory as this. And, by

the way, I have a partiality for the German original of this passage. It seems to lose some of its force by translation.

It may interest you that as a boy and youth I frequently and while at school in Wuerzburg regularly attended services in the Lutheran Church. At Elkhart, Ind., I for the first time attended services in a church of the Missouri Synod, a Rev. Heinze with whom I became acquainted being the minister. At other places I attended churches of your synod and have for a long time read the *Lutheraner* and later the *Lutheran Witness* and also *Lehre und Wehre*.

It is certainly interesting and affords real satisfaction and encouragement to know that Concordia Seminary, the largest theological seminary in America, has not a single modernist, neither among the students nor among the professors and that modernists are not tolerated in your church. It has interested me very much to take notice from the publications of your synod of your unquestionable loyalty to the old faith and of the unmistakable evidences of the determination "to be Christians in earnest," to use an expression from Luther's "Deutsche Messe." I wish that concerning the attitude of the Mennonite Church as a whole toward liberalism the same could be said. It is true that we (speaking of the Missouri Synod and the conservative Mennonites) do not see alike on all doctrinal points and the differences are such as to exclude a general working together. But a thousand times rather would I see the Lutheran Church remaining strictly Lutheran and holding fast to the Gospel of salvation through the blood of Christ than take a position such as is held by some of our modernistic Mennonites, though I agree with them on certain points.

Some of the students of Concordia Seminary desire a word from me. It is superfluous to say here that you have chosen the highest calling within human reach. I am sure that you realize the contrast between Concordia Seminary and the many seminaries of our land in which the truth of the Gospel is being questioned and doubted and denied, where learned men bend their energies upon convincing the students that the Bible is a human book and the Christian religion is the product of natural development; where students are trained in the art of sowing doubt and unbelief in the hearts of men and to do this under a semblance of preaching the Gospel; in other words, the highest calling is perverted into the very opposite. A comparison of this sort may be of service toward a keener appreciation of the privilege of being trained under influences such as prevail in Concordia Theological Seminary. May you in time go forth as faithful witnesses to the truth of salvation through the blood of Christ.

With the hearty wish of the continued blessings of the Lord upon Concordia Seminary I remain

Very sincerely yours

[Unsigned, but by John Horsch]

## John D. Brunk and Mennonite Hymnody

John C. Wenger

John D. Brunk (1872-1926) wrote a goodly number of hymns (tunes) which have been adopted in the two major hymnals of the Mennonite Church. The *CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMNAL*, published in the year 1902, contains the following Brunk tunes: "Watchman's Call" (57); "Dublin" (178); "Hagerstown" (212); "Vespers" (287); "Lilies of the Field" (361); "The Light of the World" (382); "No Abiding City Here" (390); "Jesus the Teacher" (391); "Come to Me" (395); and "Benediction" (412). The first two were arranged by Brunk while the others were his compositions. Of these perhaps the two greatest are numbers 212 and 382. The first has with it the great hymn of Isaac Watts, "Great God, indulge my humble claim"; it is said that Brunk very highly regarded Watts as a hymn writer. The second of these grand musical compositions is "Ye are the Light of the World," a beloved hymn in Mennonite circles. The first has a sort of gentle rhythm and a flowing melody; the tune runs gently up and down the scale like the skyline of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, Brunk's home as a boy, youth and young man. (Walter E. Yoder has made this observation.) The second, "Ye are the Light of the World," is more spirited melody.

In 1911 Mennonite Publishing House added a SUPPLEMENT to the *CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL HYMNAL*. Five Brunk tunes appear in the SUPPLEMENT: "Watts" (413); "In Thy Holy Place" (434); "Love at Home," Brunk's arrangement (444); "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say" (472); and "Sweetest Hosannas" (480). It is the opinion of the writer that the greatest of these is that associated with Brunk's favorite writer, Isaac Watts, "Before Jehovah's Awful Throne" (413), a truly great musical composition. Many Mennonites would undoubtedly prefer "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say" because of the lively melody it has. But a love for "Watts" grows upon one.

Brunk had served as Musical Editor of the 1902 Hymnal as well as of its 1911 Supplement. He was assigned the same position for the *CHURCH HYMNAL*, *MENNONITE* which appeared the year after he died. The preparation of this book for the press was the crowning work of Brunk's life. His work, together with that of the Hymn Editor, will stand the test of time. But here his greatest work was not as a composer but as an editor. Eight hymns were included from the old hymnal and its supplement, and he added only four new ones of his composition: "Behold the Man" (109) and "The Prayer Upon the Mountain" (227), both by Brunk's friend, John W. Wayland of Virginia; "Alone with Thee" (438) and "We Would See Jesus" (510).

Humanly speaking, it was a tragedy that ill health and an early death cut short the creative work of John D. Brunk.



# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

Published quarterly by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference. **Editors:** John C. Wenger, Goshen, Indiana and Melvin Gingerich, North Newton, Kansas. **Associate Editors:** S. F. Coffman, H. S. Bender, J. B. Smith, C. Z. Mast, J. C. Clemens, Ira D. Landis, Paul Erb and H. A. Brunk. **Office Editor:** Paul Erb. **Publication Office:** Scottsdale, Pennsylvania.

Vol. VII

JUNE, 1946

No. 2

## Bishop John Mellinger Kreider

BY NELSON E. KAUFFMAN

On a farm adjoining the little village of Soudersburg, Pa., eight miles out of Lancaster City, John Mellinger Kreider was born May 24, 1869, to George and Anna Mellinger Kreider. Little John's grandmother Mellinger, who spent hours reading from the Bible to him, made a lasting impression for good on his early life. As soon as he was old enough, he attended the village school at Soudersburg which joined his father's farm. His formal education ceased when he finished the eighth grade, but from that day on he became a diligent student of the Scriptures. In John's boyhood days the Mennonite Church at Strasburg which he attended regularly, held their Sunday School services in the afternoon. When about twenty, he followed the ministers into the anteroom one Sunday to make known to them his desire to become a member of the church. Although they felt a young man of twenty was hardly capable of comprehending the meaning of the doctrine of salvation, after considering his request, they concluded that if this young man had sufficient interest in spiritual things to leave a young people's gathering on Sunday afternoons to attend the house of God, he was qualified for church membership. Consequently he was baptized. He proved his sincerity by taking an interest in other youths. He and a close friend, Amos Ressler, opened and conducted a Sunday School at Ronks, Pa., and John acted as Superintendent. A short time later he was asked to assist in evening Bible Reading classes at this same place.

In the year of 1890 he was married to Hettie Buckwalter, a neighborhood acquaintance. For 8 years they lived on a 10 acre farm near the home place. He raised truck which he took regularly to the large Lancaster market.

It was in the year of 1884 that the first Mennonite families in Lancaster Co. decided to go west of the Mississippi. Approximately 17 adults with their children located in Marion Co., Mo., by 1898. This group felt a definite need of a minister. For 8 years they struggled along holding services without a pastor. It so happened that when one of this group went back to Pa. to attend a funeral, the others asked him to try to find a qualified brother to come along back with him. Bishop Isaac Eby was the first brother to be approached about the matter and he thought immediately of the ambitious young John Kreider. He secured permission from the



*J. M. Kreider, 1869-1946  
At the age of 19*

Lancaster Conference to ordain this brother, although quite young for such a responsibility. But at the age of 29, John M. Kreider was ordained to the ministry at the Paradise Meeting House, near Lancaster, on Feb. 11, 1898. He with his wife and 4 children, Lena M., George, Anna, and Jesse, and his first cousin John H. Hershey, and family moved to Missouri.

In Lancaster when a younger man was ordained, he had plenty of senior help. In Missouri John M. Kreider found himself 60 miles from the nearest minister and 175 miles from a bishop. He learned to decide things without consulting other ministers. For a number of years this small group of worshipers met in the various homes, then in a schoolhouse, and later in a rented church in the town of Palmyra. Six years later a small church was erected 2 miles east of Palmyra and on the 160 acre farm which John later bought from Jacob Rohrer. He lived on this farm until the day of his death. He started in the dairy business in a small way, and his efforts were blessed until he was milking 40 cows. He sold bulk milk for many years, but unlike many other farmers, refused to sell his milk on Sundays. Five children were born in the large plantation house: John, Harry, Daniel, Amy, and Philip. George and Harry died in early youth, and Philip passed away in 1935. Bro. and Sister

*turn to p. 2, col. 1*

## The Amish Mennonite Colony in Audrain Co. Missouri

BY L. GLEN GUENGERICH

The Amish Mennonite Colony in Audrain County, Missouri, lasted nineteen years. The idea of establishing such a colony was born in the pioneering minds of three Mennonite brethren, viz., Jacob D. Guengerich (1843-1926), John C. Gingerich (1846-1929), and John B. Miller (1844-1929), all of Johnson County, Iowa. Their purposes for establishing a new colony were twofold: (1) to find cheaper land so that their children could more easily establish homes of their own, and (2) to keep their Amish Mennonite faith and Christian heritage intact.

Accordingly, in the fall of 1897 three brethren, J. D. Guengerich, J. C. Gingerich, (brothers-in-law) and John B. Miller, drove south into Missouri a distance of about two hundred miles, making the trip with horse and buggy and averaging around seventy miles per day. They prospected in various localities and found a seemingly favorable location near Centralia, in Audrain Co., Mo., a pleasing, level country, mostly occupied by farmers who had come from Kentucky and Virginia. Here, too, land was comparatively cheap, ranging in price from \$20.00 to \$40.00 per acre while in Iowa at the same time land was selling from \$40.00 to \$75.00 per acre. Besides, these Missouri farmers appeared to be slipshod and careless in their farming methods and some had a peculiar inclination for doing things the easiest and shortest way. For example, they plowed very shallow; some planted the same field in corn for years and then let it rest for a year; many made little round stacks of hay in the field so that the stock would run all over the field to eat and manure hauling could thus be eliminated; one farmer got rid of the manure by piling it in the corn crib. Some did not even go to this bother, as one settler said, and made their mules almost stand on their heads. Two of the prospectors, Guengerich and Gingerich, evidently were of the opinion that more thrifty farming methods might change this aspect into a more fruitful land.

Therefore, in the spring of 1898 three Iowa families—J. C. Gingerich, V. V. Swartzendruber and Elmer J. Guengerich—moved down and located near Rowena, Mo. Swartzendruber bought a farm; the others rented, but later bought farms near Centralia. In the spring of

*turn to p. 2 col. 2*



JOHN MELLINGER KREIDER

*continued from col. 2, p. 1*

Kreider also gave a home to two orphan children for 14 years.

J. M. Kreider was a firm believer in Christian Education. Although he himself was deprived of a higher education, he sent his seven children who grew to maturity, to Hesston College and Bible School. For a number of years he served as a member of the Mennonite Board of Education. At one time N. E. Byers came to his home to solicit funds for Goshen College. He asked his wife if she could do without a carpet for the living room a while longer. She said she could if he wanted money to give to help the School. Goshen College then received a gift of \$25.00. Few Mennonite bishops of equal means have given more freely of time, money, and counsel to the Christian education program of the church.

On Sept. 29, 1912, John M. Kreider was ordained Bishop by Bishop Daniel Kauffman. He was given oversight of all the congregations in Northeastern Missouri. Bishop J. M. Kreider was an active evangelist for 25 years, serving in all parts of the U.S. and Canada. He filled important places on a number of church boards and committees. He was chairman of the first Hospital Study Committee in the Mennonite Church, the outgrowth of which is the LaJunta Hospital of today. He did a notable work on the committee which arranged the merging of the Mennonite and Western Amish Mennonite Conferences. No one person did more than he to help in the spiritual growth of the small Dakota-Montana, now North Central Conference. In more recent years he spent months in that Conference district helping in ordinations.

J. M. Kreider had a very characteristic way of preaching. His messages were always dynamic and filled with illustrations taken from his own experiences. He was a man of firm and positive convictions. No one wondered where he stood. He was outspoken against sin and worldliness. Some considered him rather severe, but those who were most closely associated with him learned to know him as a tender-hearted, sympathetic, considerate minister, who would give up his life before he would sacrifice a principle of right. During the 48 years of his ministry he had only a small congregation of his own, but his teaching and preaching and unwavering zeal for the work of the church reached from coast to coast. He was assisted in the ministry for many years by his brother-in-law, Harry R. Buckwalter, and his son, John, who is a deacon. When he reached the age of 70 he made a request to the Conference for the ordination of a younger man to assist him in his Bishop work; and so in 1940 the writer was assigned this work and spent 6 happy years working with this older man before God called him home Feb. 28, 1946.

As an expression of deep respect for J. M. Kreider, friends and relatives came from 8 states, and it was the largest funeral ever held in his home congregation.

For 8 years he taught the adult class in the Hannibal Mission Summer Bible School, and in that capacity was deeply appreciated.

THE AMISH MENNONITE COLONY

*continued from col. 3, page 1*

1900 the families of J. D. Guengerich and two sons-in-law, E. C. Beachey and Dan Esch, moved there too. The same fall Pre. John Zimmerman and family of McPherson Co., Kansas, moved in. From then on regular church services were held in the dwelling houses but the practice of furnishing dinner to the church was never adopted as it had been with most Amish congregations elsewhere. In the spring of 1900 a Sunday school was organized and held mostly in the Strother school district which came to be the center of the settlement. Some years later when the colony began to melt away Sunday school was held in the Burnhan district. Frequently these services were held in the afternoon.

The first member of this Amish Mennonite colony to become a native Missourian was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Guengerich, Willis, born May 22, 1900.

In the fall of 1900 the David Yoder family from Wellman, Iowa, moved to the new colony. The following fall Shem Swartzendruber and family of Wright Co., Iowa, moved to Missouri; and at about the same time D. K. Yoder, formerly from Wright Co., Iowa, moved into this region and remained until May, 1902, when he moved to Huron Co., Michigan. In the spring of 1902 Pre. Noah Yoder of near Kalona, Iowa, and his son John with their families, and Lewis O. Gingerich, a son-in-law, and wife (recently married) moved in.

Death made its first visit to the colony in the same spring that ground for a cemetery was leased by the congregation from David Yoder. Ira, the son of Valentine V. Swartzendruber, died on Friday, March 29, 1901, at the age of 4 years 3 months and 21 days. And as the settlement grew from the original three families to a crest of thirteen, this cemetery also grew, and before the colony finally disappeared seven more found this their last resting place. In February, 1903, Ida, wife of Lewis O. Gingerich, passed away; then a child of D. C. Esch's; then one of Elmer Guengerich's; then one of E. C. Beachy's; one of Chris Gingerich's; later one of H. A. Yoder's. In 1910, Lydia, wife of J. D. Guengerich, died and was buried there in the spring but after the death of her husband, was exhumed and buried by his side in Iowa. The above cemetery is one and one-half miles south of the Strother schoolhouse. There was a cement wall around it.

Soon after the death of Ida, wife of Lewis O. Gingerich, Ed. Miller, also a son-in-law of Pre. Noah Yoder, of Johnson County, Iowa, moved into the home with his father-in-law. In the spring of 1903

Jacob Shetler, son-in-law of J. D. Guengerich, moved into the settlement from Iowa, while Moses Nafziger moved in from Iowa, about the same time.

Some time preceding 1907 Isaiah and Lizzie Kauffman and their mother, Mrs. David J. Kauffman, moved there from Fayette Co., Ill. Sister Kauffman, the mother, died in March, 1907. She was taken to Arthur, Ill., to be buried. Isaiah and Lizzie lived there a few years and then went to Bloomfield, Montana, where they were both married.

About the year 1907 or '08 Pre. Noah Yoder and son-in-law Ed. Miller moved back to Iowa. V. V. Swartzendruber moved to Hydro, Okla. About the same time Joseph Overholt moved in from the Panhandle, Texas, region. In 1909 Ben Esch moved in from West Branch, Mich., stayed about two years, and then left for Oklahoma. Daniel J. Swartzendruber formerly of Maryland, moved here from Illinois, but remained only a few months and then moved to Fauquier Co., Va. The Joe Overholt family moved away in about 1912.

In the fall of 1907, Henry A. Yoder, of Iowa Co., Ia., and Barbara, daughter of J. D. Guengerich, were married and lived in the community for some years. A little later Esther, daughter of Shem Swartzendruber, was married to Simon Gnagey and moved to Huron Co., Mich. In Dec, 1906 Chris Gingerich and Barbara Yoder were married. Also William Hersberger of Indiana, married a daughter of Pre. John Zimmerman. In Jan. 1911, Frank Gingerich, son of J. C. Gingerich, married Inez Willianson, a native, and moved to Iowa. Nancy, the youngest daughter of J. D. Guengerich, was married in the fall of 1914 to John M. Yoder of Parnell, Iowa, and moved to that place.

As the colony grew, it prospered. Nearly all bought farms. The farms ranged in size from 100 to 160 acres. Through much hard work and thrift, for which the Amish are noted, this community did assume a changed aspect. Many built new homes and larger barns. Better farming methods made the land more productive. The soil was built up with fertilizer. Heretofore, the native Missourians had to plow their corn one way because it was drilled; by the time it was "laid by" each row was ridged up about like sweet potatoes. The easygoing natives had always used a small disc drawn by two mules; the colonists brought in four-horse discs. Threshing was also a long-drawn-out affair for them; at one place it took them most of a half day to set the threshing machine. However, as the Missourians learned new farming methods from the Amish settlers, the Amish also learned from the Missourians.

But in spite of thrift, hard work, soil improvement, and good farming methods, there were some crop failures because of unfavorable weather. The first year, 1898, was wet and unseasonable for good crops. The climate often seemed to run in extremes—either too much rainfall or else too hot and dry. But the crop failure

turn to p. 4, col. 1



# Short History of Mt. Pisgah

The first Mennonite settlers in Northeastern Missouri came to Shelby Co. in the year 1865. Benjamin Hershey bought 160 acres from the Hannibal, St. Joseph Railroad on Oct. 9, 1865 for \$2,048.00. This (Shelby Co. Recorder of Deeds—Shelbyville, Mo., Book N p. 434) location was fourteen miles from Clarence in the locality of the present Mt. Pisgah Church at Cherry Box. He then moved to Shelby Co. with his family in the spring of 1871. (Cent. Hist. of Mennonites of Ill. p. 160)

He was ordained bishop at Sterling, Ill. in the year 1870.

In the tide of emigration that came west after the Civil War, there were other Mennonites. Among them was Martin Lapp who was possibly the first Mennonite minister in Missouri. He moved from Illinois in 1855, worked among a small group of Amish, and after a few years moved to Shelby Co. Later on he moved back to Illinois.

In Oct., 1865, Christian Lapp bought land in Shelby Co. Soon after this, two of his brothers came into the community with their families from Sterling, Ill. His brother Benjamin was ordained minister before leaving Illinois and was instrumental with his brothers in organizing a congregation with 20 charter members. His brother Abe, was an exhorter, and Christian was a deacon.

The first church was built in 1872. In the early years it was used by both Dunkards and Mennonites. Later it was sold to the Dunkards and it is still in use by them today. Michael Shank visited the congregation and wrote the following in the *Herald of Truth*, under date of May 1873: "The Ministers here are Benjamin Hershey, Benjamin Lapp, and Abraham Lapp, and Deacon Abraham Shellenberger." (Herald of Truth, Vol. 10, No. 5, May 1873.)

A few Dunkard people moved into the community about this time. Ben Lapp took an old disabled man, George Boiler by name, into his home. This man was baptized into the Dunkard Church. Ben Lapp then moved away and Boiler went to stay with Chris Lapp. Both Chris Lapp and his brother, Abe, then united with the Dunkards. These were likely the only Mennonite families which united with the other church. This matter caused considerable difficulty in those early years.

Church services were held every two weeks from 1872. In 1880 the membership was thirteen. (Herald of Truth, Vol. 18, p. 48, March 1880)

J. L. Brubacher, writing for the *Herald of Truth*, Apr. 17, 1885 says,—“The brethren here have organized a Sunday School, and good interest is manifested, and we hope that they may be able to do much good and aid in building up the Kingdom of Christ. Their meeting services are held every two weeks.” They had Sunday School only in the summer months until 1900; then a correspondent said, “We have an evergreen Sunday School

and change teachers every quarter.” (Herald of Truth, Feb. 15, 1900)

The following account of the Sunday School appeared in Herald of Truth; under date of Feb. 1, 1893: “Largest attendance for the year, 54; smallest, 29; average, 40. We conducted our Sunday School in the following order: Introduction read and commented on by our superintendent, hearing of general questions, singing, repeating text verses, prayer by superintendent, reading of lessons, etc.”

Henry Yother, of Blue Springs, Neb. stopped in Shelby Co. in evangelistic work on Oct. 15, 1884. The Evangelization Committee of the Missouri Conference helped with his expenses. This was likely their first evangelistic meeting.

John S. Coffman held meetings at Cherry Box in Feb. 1886. Writing for the *Herald of Truth*, Mar. 15, 1886, he says there were two additions to the church in 1885, and at the time of writing there were three more applicants. Coffman says further, “The church here has passed through many trials and many of the members connected with us have moved away, as is usually the case in new settlements. But they seem at present to be enjoying a fair degree of prosperity.” During this revival the church was too small for the crowds, so services were held one-half mile south in a Methodist Church. In 1887 the membership was 16.

John S. Coffman again held meetings in the congregation in the fall of 1890, resulting in 9 confessions. After spending some time there he wrote an article for the *Herald of Truth* urging people from the east to go west to help in small congregations. The first Bible Conference in the congregation was conducted in 1905. Young People's Bible Meetings were held during the summer as early as 1906.

On Jan. 30, 1908, the congregation had a Quarterly Sunday School Conference. This meeting was held at Palmyra in Oct. 1907. These meetings continue among the four congregations in Northeastern Missouri to the present.

In 1920 the congregation had preaching in the morning the second and fourth Sundays of the month, and in the evening the first and third. Young People's Bible Meetings were then conducted when they did not have preaching. At present Sunday School and preaching services are held every Sunday morning, and Young People's Bible Meetings in the evening.

The first Conference in Missouri was held at the Bethel Church in Moniteau County on Oct. 24, 1873. The second was held at Cherry Box, and for many years following it was held alternately between these two places.

In 1872 John G. Detwiler moved to Shelby Co. and started farming on the prairie. His brother-in-law, Abe Bissey had moved there two years before. Both these men married sisters of Benjamin Hershey. John Detwiler served the congregation as deacon from 1892 until 1922 when his son Noah, now living at Cherry Box, was ordained to take his place. Reuben Harder was ordained deacon at

Versailles, Mo. and moved to Cherry Box in 1939.

Benjamin Hershey served the congregation as bishop from his arrival in the community in 1871 until his death in 1888. David Kauffman of Versailles, Mo. then took oversight of the congregations until his death, when the responsibility was given to his son, Daniel. In 1912 J. M. Kreider of Palmyra, Mo. was ordained at Cherry Box to serve the churches of Northeastern Mo. Nelson E. Kauffman now serves as bishop since J. M. Kreider's death in Feb. 1946.

The ministers serving the congregation were, first, Benjamin and Abram Lapp mentioned above. In 1876 J. L. Brubacher was ordained as minister and served until 1895 when he moved to Shannon Co., Mo. In 1894 Wallace Kauffman moved in from Cass County, Mo., was ordained June 9, 1897, but died three years after from lockjaw. George Bissey was ordained for the congregation in 1902 and preached there until his death in 1942. John M. Yoder moved to the community from Michigan to help care for his mother-in-law in 1920. He is the only minister there now. Mrs. Michael Hershey is still living and is 97 years old.

The present Mt. Pisgah meeting house was built in 1899, one-fourth mile south of the Cherry Box Store. Thirty-one members are listed in the 1946 Yearbook. Nelson E. Kauffman

## QUESTION BOX

In H. S. Bender's *Two Centuries of American Mennonite Literature* this brief item appears on page 37: “*Der Waffenlose Waechter*, Millwood Gap P. O., Pa., 1871. Published quarterly by Samuel Ernst. pp. 4, 11 x 14 in. Published at least as late as 1881. LCHS has first three volumes, 1871-73.”

His grand-daughter, Mrs. Henry Knabe, Sr., Edgerton, Kansas, states that he published this religious journal for nearly twenty years. He died at Olathe, Kansas, in 1909, where he had lived since 1884.

Although the paper was published in Kansas for many years, none of the Kansas historical libraries seem to have it and there are no copies in any of our Mennonite historical libraries. Can anyone help us locate copies of this publication?

## NEWS & NOTES

Don E. Smucker, Wadsworth, Ohio, has written a companion article to Dr. Bender's “Anabaptist Vision.” Smucker's article is found in the January 1945 REVIEW.

WAR, PEACE, AND NONRESISTANCE, by Guy F. Hersherberger is now being reprinted by Mennonite Publishing House, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania. This is the standard treatise on peace and nonresistance and should be in every Mennonite library.



ures could not all be attributed to the weather.

The Amish colonists did not live in this settlement long until they found that a layer of reddish hardpan, often eighteen inches down, underlay most of their land. This hardpan would not let water through. In times of drouth no moisture could come to the surface; a heavy rain was like a deluge. The natives invariably had ponds for their cattle and cisterns for themselves. This, generally, was their drinking water. A cistern dug in hardpan held water like a jug. The Amish also built ponds for their cattle but they did not drink cistern water themselves. Without much effort they dug wells and had good water from wells 23 to 150 feet deep.

This mild Missouri climate often changed to a very violent mood and frequently sent tornadoes twisting across their land and in some places even left death in its wake. At such times Missourians rushed to their caves; many colonists also built caves.

Concerning the religious life of the settlement there was always a great interest. John Zimmerman was their preacher from 1900 until after 1910; Bishop Noah Yoder was there from 1902 until about 1907 or '08; E. C. Beachy was ordained in 1906 and was there until the last family moved away in 1917. Among the visiting ministers were J. M. Kreider, A. C. Good, Fred Gingerich, C. D. Esch—missionary to India, Menno Esch, W. K. Miller, Bishop Jacob Swartzendruber, P. P. Swartzendruber, and others. Sunday school superintendents at different times were the following; J. D. Guengerich, J. C. Gingerich, Moses Nafziger, John (K.) S. Yoder, Shem Swartzendruber, Joe Overholt, and D. C. Esch. No attendance record was kept of their services as they were usually all present but if any were absent they were really missed. Most of the time there were around thirteen families. Neighboring Missourians indicated that they would like to attend if the English language was used. However, even where attendance and interest is high there may not be complete harmony. There was some controversy concerning the use of the telephone which a few of the Amish had in their homes.

Church problems were not the main factors in causing the settlement to dissolve. There were more important causes: crop failures, unfavorable weather conditions, blood ties in other places, perhaps deaths, poor hospital and medical facilities, and others too subtle to relate. And so around 1913 the people began to move away. Some went to Kansas; some to Iowa; some to Stark Co., Ohio, and some to Huron Co., Mich; until in 1916 only two families remained, E. C. Beachy's and D. C. Esch's. In the spring of 1917 the last members of the colony left amid hearty farewells and tears from their Missouri friends.

Even today, as the casual stranger travels through this part of Audrain County, Missouri, he will still see the large barns and farm homes—rather

poorly preserved—that mark the place where an Amish Mennonite settlement thrived for the most of nineteen years, and it may stir the heart to know that their culture and influence are more lasting and enduring in the lives of their former neighbors than are their material monuments.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

*The Amish Mennonite Colony in Audrain County, Missouri* by Daniel C. Esch in the Gospel Herald Feb. 15, 1940.

*Personal correspondence* with D.C. Esch, Pigeon, Michigan and Nelson Kauffman, Hannibal, Mo.

*Interviews* with the following members of the former Missouri Colony:

Mrs. Ruhama Beachy, Kalona, Iowa  
Mrs. John M. Yoder, Parnell, Iowa  
Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Yoder, Parnell, Iowa

Willis V. Guengerich, Goshen, Ind.  
John (K.) S. Yoder, Kalona, Ia.

Nettie Beachy Shetler, Kalona, Iowa  
Edwin E. Guengerich, Kalona, Iowa  
Dan. J. Guengerich, Kalona, Iowa

Chris Gingerich, Kalona, Iowa  
L. O. Gingerich, Kalona, Iowa

*Diaries* fully recorded from 1900 to 1904 by Emanuel C. Beachy deceased in 1921.

*Recollections* from childhood by the writer of this article.

Kalona, Iowa

# Forthcoming Publications

It is a matter of gratitude to report that interest in church history continues to flourish in the Mennonite Church. In the near future Mennonite Publishing House, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, plans to publish a number of books of a historical nature. One of the most important projects, the publication of the complete works of Menno Simons, 1496-1561, has been assigned by the publishing committee of Mennonite Publication Board to the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference. The latter committee is planning a splendid new edition of Menno's works in a revised translation, with adequate historical introductions to Menno's several books.

Mennonite Publishing House is also planning to republish the great classic of martyrology, T. J. van Braght's MARTYRS' MIRROR. The English edition of 1938 was quickly sold out at six dollars per volume. Every Mennonite home will wish to purchase a copy of the new edition if they do not have a good English edition of van Braght's work.

The first edition of John Horsch's splendid volume, MENNONITES IN EUROPE, 1942, quickly sold out and is at the present time out of print. As soon as the historical committee can arrange for a few points of revision, this volume will be reprinted.

GLIMPSES OF MENNONITE HISTORY by John C. Wenger has been thoroughly revised by the author and will come off the press (Scottsdale) in the course of the next few months. It is actually a new book, rather than a mere revision.

# RECENT PUBLICATIONS

## LUCY WINCHESTER

Published by Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pa. Cloth binding, \$2.00. 376 pages.

Christmas Carol Kauffman, the author of this true story of the life of Lucy Winchester, has been writing short stories for a number of years. Most of them have been published in the Youth's Christian Companion, where "LUCY WINCHESTER" first appeared as a serial of thirteen chapters.

After repeated requests from readers, the author continued the story, with Lucy's permission, and vividly portrays her search for a soul-satisfying religion, over a period of forty years. Reared in a home where God was not honored and the Bible never read, Lucy nevertheless managed to attend Sunday School for a few years, as a child, and the longing for something better, grew in her heart. We feel that through all the trials and afflictions she suffered before she found real peace, God kept His hand over her, as she so often asked. The seeds sown by Brother Bustleton in the little schoolhouse, so many years ago, took root in her heart, proving again that God's word shall not return unto Him void.

The author's husband is pastor and Superintendent of the Mennonite Mission church, located at Hannibal, Missouri. Both he and his wife have labored faithfully for thirteen years in this, their chosen field, bringing the gospel to the poor and needy in this city, which is an industrial center. On their letter head appears the statement, "The Little Mission with a big welcome, where people lose their sins and find their Saviour."

This was the experience of Lucy, one of the first to attend services at the mission, and a member of a class of twenty-seven received into church fellowship. For the past twelve years her life has been an outstanding testimony of faith in God, and the means of leading others to Him.

Truth is stranger than fiction, and the author has found much human interest material in the daily lives of these people, in whose spiritual welfare she is so deeply interested. Many of them know nothing of God's saving grace, and others do not care.

But in the life of Lucy, we have an example of one who was constantly seeking for something better, while in the midst of poverty, illness, death of loved ones, and associating with unbelievers. We sympathize with her yearning for spiritual satisfaction, admire her unfaltering faith and acceptance of the crosses she must bear, and rejoice with her when she says: "By God's help I mean to serve Him with my whole heart as long as I live; for truly He has kept His hand over me until I found Him!"



# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

Published quarterly by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference. **Editors:** John C. Wenger, Goshen, Indiana and Melvin Gingerich, North Newton, Kansas. **Associate Editors:** S. F. Coffman, H. S. Bender, J. B. Smith, C. Z. Mast, J. C. Clemens, Ira D. Landis, Paul Erb and H. A. Brunk. **Office Editor:** Paul Erb. **Publication Office:** Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

Vol. VII

SEPTEMBER, 1946

No. 3

## Introduction to the Anabaptist Tract on the Atonement of Christ

JOHN C. WENGER

Several years ago The Mennonite Historical Library of Goshen College secured a unique *Sammelband*, undated but probably printed in Switzerland or South Germany somewhere around the year 1600. The contents of the book indicate that its several tracts were produced by Swiss Brethren writers in the very early years of the Anabaptist movement, perhaps for the most part before 1530. Since a description of the nine items of part two of the composite volume has already been published the present article will be devoted entirely to the fourth tract of the collection, a treatise on the atonement of Christ entitled, *Von der Gnugthuung Christi*.

The tract on the atonement was translated into Dutch in the sixteenth century and published in an edition of 1560 and reprinted in 1565. The Dutch *Sammelband* contains the same items as the German original except that the trial of Michael Sattler was relegated from the third place of part two to the end of the book. Professor Samuel Cramer, 1842-1913, held that the tract on the atonement was of Dutch Mennonite origin, but his argument that the Biblical quotations are from the Dutch Liesveldt version is without significance; the fact is equally well accounted for by the explanation that the translator evidently incorporated readings from the Liesveldt Bible in his translation. On the other hand, Professor Cramer admitted that the tract contained Germanisms, quite as one would expect in a work having a German original. The present writer agrees with Dr. Robert Friedmann that the tract is of Swiss, rather than Dutch, Anabaptist circles. This would best account for the existence of a manuscript copy of the German *Sammelband* tracts, copied by the Hutterian Brethren of Moravia, and preserved as late as 1930 in *Schloss Mittersill* in the Austrian Alps. Quite interestingly the Hutterian codex agrees with the Goshen *Sammelband* copy even in such details as the omission of the title, *Von bösen Vorstehern* (item 8), and in preserving—in contrast with the Dutch version—the exact order of the nine tracts. Dr. Friedmann is also assuredly correct in his assertion that the book “derives without doubt from the earliest period” of Swiss Brethren history. This is evident from its “radical” critique of both the Catholics and the reformation groups, as well as by the tremendous

Turn to col. 2, p. 4

## The Faith of Our Fathers

It is common in Mennonite circles to speak frequently of the faith of our fathers, of our Anabaptist heritage, of our Biblical doctrines. But what did our fathers actually believe? To try to provide a partial answer to this question the BULLETIN will print from time to time Anabaptist tracts of varying length. Recently we presented the text of the Schleithem Confession of Faith, 1527. In this issue we present a tract on the atonement of Christ from the same general period. It will be noted that the Anabaptist writer issued a critique of both the Catholics and the Protestants of his day.

## Program

Centennial Meeting Commemorating the Settlement of Amish-Mennonite People of the Iowa-Johnson-Washington Counties, Iowa Area in 1846

### EAST UNION CHURCH

August 9, 1946

Moderator ..... Simon Gingerich,  
Wayland, Iowa  
Choristers .... Ora Keiser, Kalona, Iowa  
Edwin Swartzendruber, Manson, Iowa

#### Forenoon Session

9:00 Song Service  
9:15 Devotion ..... W. S. Guengerich  
Wellman, Iowa  
9:30 Address of Welcome .. D. J. Fisher  
Kalona, Iowa  
9:45 “The Faith Of A People And Its  
Effect On A Community”  
H. S. Bender, Goshen, Indiana  
10:30 “Glimpses Of Community Men-  
nonite History”  
Elmer G. Swartzendruber  
Wellman, Iowa  
11:30 Closing

#### Afternoon Session

1:00 Song Service  
1:15 Devotion ..... Joseph Shetler  
Pigeon, Michigan  
1:30 “The Beginning Of The Mennonite  
Church In Switzerland, 1525”  
John C. Wenger, Goshen, Indiana  
2:15 “Iowa Mennonites In The Larger  
Work Of The Church”  
Guy F. Hershberger, Goshen, Indiana  
2:45 Short Talks  
Offering  
4:30 Closing.

#### Evening Session

7:30 Song Service  
7:45 Devotion ..... Amos Gingerich  
Williamsburg, Iowa  
8:00 “The Mennonite Conception Of The  
Church” ..... H. S. Bender  
Goshen, Indiana  
8:45 Sermon “Maintaining The Faith”  
John C. Wenger, Goshen, Indiana

## Concerning the Satisfaction of the Atonement of Christ

*An Anabaptist Tract on True Christianity,  
Written about 1527*

Translated from the Original German By  
J. C. Wenger

Paul says to the Romans in the third chapter, [that] they are all together sinners and come short of the glory which God should have from them, [yet] apart from merit [they] shall be justified by His grace through the redemption which Christ accomplished, Whom God hath set forth as a mercy seat through faith in His blood, by which He sets forth the righteousness which avails before God, in that He forgives the sins which took place formerly under the divine patience, which He manifested, etc. He says, From which also ye are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness and sanctification and redemption. John the Baptist says, [in] John 1, Behold, That is the Lamb of God who takes upon Himself the sin of the world. John says [in] I John 2, And He is the reconciliation for our sins. Peter says [in] I Peter 2, Who offered Himself [for] our sin on the tree, that we might be without sin. As the prophet also speaks, (in) Isaiah 53, We are made well through His stripes. Isaiah 9, A child is born to us, to us a child is given, etc.

Such statements, I say, and others like them, the scribes interpret as if a person could be saved through Christ whether he do the works of faith or not. If such were the case, why then should Paul say [in] Romans 2 that God will render to everyone according to his works, namely eternal life to those who strive after glory, praise and immortality with perseverance in good works, but to those who are quarrelsome and are not obedient to the truth, but are obedient to the evil, there will come disfavor and wrath, tribulation and anxiety, [namely] upon all the souls of men who do evil. He says, [in] Romans 2, Not those who hear the Law are righteous, but those who do the Law. Paul says in Romans 3, He does not make void the law through faith; [rather] he establishes it. In Romans 8 he says, There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, that God did and sent His Son in the form of sinful flesh and through sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness which the Law demands might be fulfilled in us who now walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. If ye live after



the flesh, ye shall die. Galatians 5 [states]: In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth [anything], but a faith which worketh by love. I Corinthians 13: If I had all faith so that I could remove mountains but have not love, I am nothing. Ephesians 5: For ye know that no whoremonger nor impure person nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words. Ephesians 6: For ye know that everyone will receive from the Lord that good which he hath done. II Corinthians 5: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that everyone may receive according to that which he hath done with his body, whether it be good or evil. Peter [says in] I Peter 1: And since ye call upon the Father, who without regarding the person, judgeth according to each man's work so pass the time of your pilgrimage with fear. II Peter 1: And therefore offer, with highest diligence, through your faith, virtue; through virtue, knowledge; through knowledge, moderation; through moderation, patience; through patience, godliness; through godliness, brotherly love; through brotherly love, common love. For if such [virtues] abound in you ye shall neither be lazy nor idle in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he who lacketh these things is blind and doth grope. John says [in] I John 1, If we should say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we would lie and do not the truth. I John 2: Hereby know we that we do know Him if we keep His commandment. He who saith he knoweth Him and keepeth not His commandment is a liar. He who saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness. I John 3: Children, let no one deceive you. He who doeth righteousness is righteous as He is righteous, but he who doeth sin is of the devil. He who is born of God sinneth no more for his seed remaineth in him and [he] is not able to sin for he is born of God. I will not mention what Christ says [in] Matthew 4: Improve yourselves for the kingdom of heaven is come near. [He] says to Peter and to others: Follow me. Matthew 5: Let your light shine for men that they may see your good works and praise your Father [who is] in heaven. Ye ought not to think that I am come to do away with the Law and the Prophets. I did not come to do away with [them] but to fulfill. Matthew 7: Therefore he who heareth my discourse and doeth it, him will I compare with a prudent man who built his house upon a rock. And then a pelting rain fell and floods came and the winds blew and beat upon the house but yet it fell not for it was founded upon a rock. And he who heareth my word and doeth it not is like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. Matthew 10: He who confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven. He who loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he who loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And [consider] what He says of the

good seed which falls into the good earth, Matthew 13. Matthew 16, Mark 8, Luke 9: If anyone wisheth to come after me, let him deny himself and take his cross upon himself and follow me. For he who wisheth to preserve his life shall lose it, but he who loseth his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 16: For it shall come to pass that the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father, with his angels and then will he requite each one according to his works. [In] Luke 10 Christ speaks to the scribe [that] he should love God with his whole heart and his neighbor as himself; thus would he live. Luke 13: Strive that ye may enter through the narrow door. Luke 14: If anyone come to me and hate not his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and also his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And he who doth not bear his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. He who doth not renounce all that he hath cannot be my disciple. John 13: I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them. A new commandment give I unto you that ye love one another as I have loved you. So shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love among yourselves.

Further, as Christ therefore hath suffered for us (He did not have where he might lay His head, Matthew 8) [must] we never through faith in Him renounce [our] supposed possessions and our [own] selves, and suffer for His sake? Why then does He say [in] Matthew 19 to the young man who asked Him how he might be saved, If thou desirest to be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me? Why does He say, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God? Yea, why does He say [in] Luke 5 to Peter and Andrew (as was said above), Follow me? [And] to Matthew, Follow Me? Did not Zacchaeus say, [in] Luke 19, after he [came to] know the poor Jesus and had received Him, Behold, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone I will restore fourfold? It would then be the case that Christ had lied when He says [in] Matthew 6, We cannot serve God and mammon. And that which Luke writes [in] Acts 2, of the righteous Christian Church which was once at Jerusalem, would not be true, But those who believed were together and had all things common. Yea, the article of the Christian Faith which says, A communion of the saints, would also be untrue. Why then does He say [in] Matthew 8, He who wisheth to come after me, let him deny himself, take his cross upon himself and follow me? [And,] He who wisheth to save his life shall lose it. Why does He say [in] Matthew 5, Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake? [And,] Blessed are ye when men revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you for my sake, if they lie therein. Matthew 10, John 15: The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for

the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. John 16: They will put you under the ban. The time cometh that he who killeth you will think that he doeth God a service therein. Verily, verily, I say to you, Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. Does not Peter also say [in] I Peter 2, For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, and left us an example, that ye should follow His footsteps. Yea indeed, if Christ therefore did enough by his passion which He suffered at Jerusalem, and nothing was uncompleted of his suffering, why then does Paul say in Colossians 1, Now I rejoice in my suffering which I bear for you and fill up in my body that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ? II Corinthians 1: But as we have tribulation or comfort it works out for your good. Ephesians 3: Therefore I, Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. Philippians 2: And if I be offered as an offering and service to God [for] your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. In the same way, did not Christ chiefly establish the Lord's Supper for this reason, namely, that they had to suffer as Christ their Head, and through death enter into glory, yea that their death should not be their's but the Lord's and that they like their Head should arise [from the dead]? And what about the dear apostles and prophets, yea even Christ Himself, and likewise the dear friends of God who suffer much at this time and who have prophesied for so many years—if the members of Christ must not suffer like their Head? Does Peter not say [in] I Peter 5, Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He might exalt you at the right time? Cast upon Him all your care, for He careth for you. Be sober, watch ye, for your adversary, the slanderer, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whether he can devour someone, whom resist, fortified by faith, since ye know that through your brotherhood which is in the world the same suffering is accomplished.

And for this reason when Paul says [in] Romans 3 that those who are justified through Christ are justified without any merit or without the works of the Law he does not mean that a man can be saved without the works of faith (since Christ and the apostles demand such), but without those works which are done outside of faith and of the love of God—such as circumcision and the like, which the Jews did that they might thereby be justified. Therefore whenever Paul and Christ apply the term *justifying* to works they do not mean that those works are of men, but [they are] of God and of Christ (through whose strength the man performs them). [Those justifying works] are not performed by the man as if he received something as his own, but [they are performed] because God wishes so to give the man such works that they are His works. And why is there a mercy seat with God except for His own through His will? Why should God make known His will, if He would not wish that a person do it? Yea, how could God be satisfied with anyone



who neither wishes to hear the will of God concerning His mercy seat, or who having heard and knowing thereof wishes to hold it only with words? Will he not diminish his boast that the mercy seat exists for his sake? Yea, he gives his own word and says that he heard it from the mercy seat. Yea, he curses and persecutes everyone who refuses to believe him. Will such boasting not lead to his damnation? But if we would think like Paul [in] I Corinthians 1, where he calls Christ the righteousness and wisdom of the believers or Christians, does he mean the outward Christ without the inward, and not much more the inward with the outward [Christ]? Namely, since He is the Word of the Father He makes known to us the true obedience by which alone the Father is satisfied. He is the true Bread from heaven which comes down from above to feed the souls of men. He says, He who doth not renounce all that he possesseth cannot be His disciple. He says, He who wisheth to follow me, let him deny himself. No one cometh to the Father but by me. I am the door of the sheepfold. I am the light of the world. I am the way, the truth, and the life. He testifies all this in deed. I will not mention that Paul at this place is not speaking of Pharisees or scribes (as if they were the righteousness of Christ), but of him and those like him who accept Him in truth and keep their standing as His [disciples] according to that which faith eliminates and [that which it] demands. But what have they to do with it who boast to me so proudly of Christ? They allege that Paul wrote of them when they are the chief persecutors of Christ and of Paul.

How does it concern me that the emperor claims so many kingdoms, since I am a poor beggar? But when John the Baptist says [in] John 1, Christ is the Lamb which taketh upon Himself the sin of the world, he wishes to be understood: insofar as the world surrenders to Him in faith. And therefore he says also [in] John 3, He who believeth in the Son hath everlasting life; he who doth not believe in the Son shall not see life. In the same way also when John says [in] I John 2, He is our reconciliation, he wishes to be understood: namely, of those who so recognize Him. For although He is truly a reconciliation for the whole world, that does no one any good except those who recognize and accept Him by faith. And those who [accept Him] keep the commandments of Christ. But he who does not [keep the commandments] and yet boasts of Christ as being His reconciliation is a liar, inasmuch as he has never known Christ—as John testifies. And do we think, when Peter says in I Peter 2, Who offered himself for our sins in his body on the tree that we might be without sin, [that he] meant that Christ so offered Himself for the sins of men that through Him they are pronounced free, whether or not they believe on Him, whether or not they turn from sin, whether or not they have a change of mind, as the works-saints and scribes think? That is far [from the truth]! Why then would he say

[in] I Peter 1, Whom having not seen ye love, in whom ye also believe although ye see him not. And whereas ye call on the Father who, without regarding the person, judgeth according to every man's work, conduct your life in the time of your pilgrimage in fear. Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to his great mercy hath begotten us again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Now those who are without faith, who have not ceased [from sin], those sinning even worse than before, yea [those with] just as slavish and ugly a disposition toward God and their neighbor as they had before—how can such people appropriate the words of Peter for themselves, since Peter did not write to them but to Christians? In the same way one understands also the two statements of Isaiah, for in Isaiah 28 God said concerning Christ, Behold, I lay a chosen, costly cornerstone in Zion and he who believes therein shall not be put to shame. The ruling Lord, however, shall be your fear and your dread, and He shall be to you for sanctification, for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, for the two houses of Israel, etc.

How then did Christ do enough for our sins? Answer: [He did enough] not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world, insofar as they believe on Him, and follow Him according to the demands of faith, as was said. Yea, He has done enough as the Head of his church; He does no less for His members day by day so that He [continues to] do enough for those who are His; just as He has done from the beginning [so will He continue to do] until His return. And therefore just as one speaks of justification through Christ so must one also speak of faith, [namely] that repentance is not apart from works, yea not apart from love (which is an unction), for only such an anointed faith as one receives from the resurrection from the dead is [at all a] Christian faith, and [it alone] is reckoned for righteousness, Romans 4. Again, one must not speak of works after the manner of the works-saints, [namely], works of the Law, but [one] must preach works of faith, that is a turning back from works, possessions, and yourself, through faith in Christ the crucified;—not as though a man could do this of himself but as he is able to do through the strength of faith, so that these [works] are not of man but of God, inasmuch as the will and the ability to turn back to God are not of man but the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Truly happy then is the man who keeps on the middle path and does not yield to the works-saints (who promise salvation or the forgiveness of sins through works apart from faith—that is through the supposed possession of works—and thus veer to the left, preaching works; paying no attention to a constant faith and not wishing to see or hear of a faith which is sufficient unto salvation: all their works are like wild plums, that is, ceremonies devoid of faith) nor on the other hand to the scribes, who although they have kept clear

of [building on] works yet veer to the right and under the name of gospel teach a faith without works, taking the poor and obedient Christ (who had not where to lay His head, Luke 9, and without either the murmuring complaints or the defense of men said, Luke 22, Nevertheless, Father, not my will but Thine be done) for their satisfaction, but they do not wish to hear what he says [in] Luke 9, Come, follow me. Luke 14: He who doth not renounce all that he possesseth cannot be my disciple. Mark 8: He who wisheth to come after me, let him deny himself, take his cross upon himself, and follow me. Yea, the Father must also be a "fanatic" [to] them when He says, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear him. They make out of Christ, in His humanity, what the pope has made out of the saints, namely a golden calf like the Jews of old, that is, they confess Christ as David's Son and [yet] they deny Him, yea make Him a "fanatic" because God's Word and Son were sent into the world to make known the obedience or righteousness of His Father not only in words but also with "works," so that all who believe in Him might not perish in their death but be delivered from death. All their preaching and fruit are like prickly thistles; they have much to say regarding faith, and [yet] know neither what Christ nor faith are; they reject works without faith in order that they may set up faith without works. They wish to obey God only with the soul and not also with the body, in order that they may escape persecution. They think that faith is a lazy and empty delusion. For this reason they are able to say that infants have faith although they give no evidence of works of faith, even when they come to years. It would then be the case that the work of faith and of the Holy Spirit would be cursing, when they are scarcely able to speak. And alas for the miserable blindness although it is not because they do not know better that they do not speak or write all this but because they wish to provide for the belly and preserve their honor.

And how well can one see here the beast that hath seven heads and ten horns, which hath again recovered from its deadly wound, inasmuch as the Romish school or *Curia* from which the bread-god and infant-baptism come originally, are again defended as the truth by the scribes. I will not mention many other things in which the scribes hypocritically imitate the papists and establish them as Christian. But thus must the second beast with the two horns—that is, the gang of the scribes—cause the earth and the people thereon to worship again the first beast, again establishing the papal oil-idol—that is, popery—casting down fire from heaven, banishing and cursing everyone who does not cleave to them—everything just as John had said beforehand. This is also just as he had seen in Revelation 17 where the ten horns on the beast would hate the whore and make her desolate and naked, devour her flesh and burn her with fire, seeing that God had put it in their hearts. The kingdom would be given to the beast



until the Word of God should be fulfilled. Yea, those ten horns who like kings should receive the kingdom after the beast, would be of one mind, would give authority to the beast, would make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb would overthrow them. This is how there should arise scholars in the last days from all the higher schools [of learning], awakened through the Spirit, and the Romish church or congregation of works-saints, possessed of great zeal, would bring everything on itself and burn up what it had accumulated of money, silver and other food, and damn them [the awakened scholars] as heretics. But soon thereafter they would fall back to the beast—that is, the Romish school—and defend it, and the kingdom of God which had previously come to them they would again cast away. Yea these [apostate reformers] would defend the beast against the Word of God, and those who cleave [to the beast] and fight vehemently with the Lamb. Nevertheless, the Lamb who is a Lord of lords and the King of all kings will conquer them, together with [assisted by] His believers and called ones. And would not this, together with the papists, be the abomination of desolation of which Daniel in the ninth chapter, Paul [in] II Thessalonians 2, Peter [in] II Peter 2, yea also Christ [in] Matthew 24, Mark 13, [and] Luke 17, clearly have spoken, [namely] where that one sits in the holy place, allows himself to be worshipped either for gospel or for Christianity, according to which the works-saints say, Lo, here is Christ! The scribes cry, Lo, here is Christ! Therefore, happy is he who departs from Babylon, that is, [who] neither believes the works-saints nor the scribes, [but] submits with fear to the disciple of Christ, because the heavenly voice, [in] Revelation 18, Isaiah 52, II Corinthians 6, cries out and says, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues, for her sins have resounded unto heaven.

### NAME OMITTED

The June issue of the BULLETIN contained a review of LUCY WINCHESTER by Mrs. Ida Yoder of Walton, Kansas. Quite unintentionally the reviewer's name failed to appear with her article. For this the editors apologize.

### DR HERSHBERGER'S BOOK REPRINTED

The splendid monograph, WAR, PEACE, AND NONRESISTANCE, by Guy F. Hershberger of Goshen College has now been reprinted, and Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania is now able to fill orders from the new edition. The book is substantially a reprint of the first edition, only a few slight changes having been made. The book has been widely and favorably reviewed. Every Mennonite home must have a copy of this valuable book.

### ANABAPTIST TRACT

Continued from Col. 1, p. 1

earnestness and eschatological flavor of the tract.

The author of the tract on the atonement is not known definitely. The present writer would offer the conjecture that it may have been Michael Sattler (d. 1527). Item one of part two of the German *Sammelband* is the Schleithem Confession of Faith written by Michael Sattler. Item two is the Epistle of Sattler to the Church at Horb. Item three is the account of Sattler's trial and martyrdom. Item four is the tract, *Concerning the Satisfaction (Atonement) of Christ*, herewith presented in an English translation. The mere fact that the tract follows the three Sattler items is of course not conclusive evidence that Sattler also wrote the *Gnugthuung Christi*. But there are several points of similarity between the tract on the atonement and the Schleithem Articles of Faith which offer some support to the conjecture that Sattler wrote the former. Both documents refer to the "burial" and "resurrection" of Christians in their relation to sin and holiness respectively. Both call upon true Christians to withdraw from "Babylon," the apocalyptic symbol of sin and apostasy which the Brethren applied to the state churches in the early years of their history. Both documents emphasize the absolute obligation of the Christian to take up the cross and follow Christ. It must be admitted however that these were all familiar concepts of the Brethren and they are insufficient to establish any given leader as the author of our tract. Within a century of Sattler's death, however, a Dutch Mennonite martyrologist ascribed the *Gnugthuung* to Sattler. "Of this hero and witness of Jesus Christ," wrote the Dutch Mennonite, "there are also other writings extant in print, treating of the atonement of Christ [*Gnugthuung Christi*]; brotherly union [*Scheithem Confession*]; divorce; of evil overseers; and the hearing of false prophets." The author gives no proof of his assertions, and may indicate nothing more than that he had examined the 1560 Dutch Version or perhaps the original German edition of the *Sammelband*.

Little needs to be said about the content of our tract, *Concerning the Satisfaction of Christ*. Strictly speaking it is not a theological treatise on the atonement. Rather, it deals with the topic, To whom do the blessings of the atonement apply? Who can claim that Christ died for him? What is meant when it is stated in Scripture that Christ is the reconciliation (propitiation) of the world? Who is meant by the "world"?

The reply of the Brethren is briefly as follows: It is indeed true that the atonement is universal in its potential scope. It would be sufficient for all men. But it is efficacious only for those who have faith, for those who are believers. But who are believers? According to the Brethren, being a believer is far more than renouncing Catholicism, the religion of works. And it is far more than boast-

ing of Christ as one's mercysat (Protestantism). It is something altogether different from making words. *Being a believer means living the Christian life*. It means bringing forth "fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:8). "It was not 'works' in an ecclesiastical sense which the Swiss Brethren were teaching, but living in the spirit of the Gospel, and by that exposing themselves inevitably to suffering and martyrdom." And only those who thus take up their cross and follow the suffering Jesus faithfully are true Christians; only they participate in the benefits and blessings of the atonement of the Lord Jesus. Hence what seems at first to be a theological treatise on the atonement turns out to be a "practical" discussion of true Christianity.

The author develops his treatise as follows: First he shows from Scripture that all men are sinners and that Christ is the Saviour of all men. But he immediately hastens on to point out that salvation does not mean antinomianism; on the contrary holiness of life is the acid test of true Christianity. The author places great stress on the absolute necessity of self-denial. He does not deny the truth of justification by faith; genuine Christian faith is "reckoned for righteousness, Romans 4." But such faith can never be divorced from life; it must of absolute necessity find expression in good deeds ("works"). But it must not be supposed that the good deeds of the Christian result from human volition. On the contrary, the good "works" of the Christian are not truly his own, but are the result of God working in him. Only those who thus allow God to work obedience in them are true Christians and they alone are justified. The ability to live a life pleasing to God is a divine gift; it is not possible by human effort. Hence true Christianity is not a religion of works (Catholicism), declares our author, nor is it a religion of bare "faith," devoid of "works" (Protestantism). Rather, it is a life of genuine holiness, a life of cross bearing, a life of earnest obedience to the Lord Jesus, a life created in the Christian by God Himself.

In closing, the author expresses his keen regret at the way the reformers went only part way in their destruction of the beast of the Apocalypse (Romanism). Yea, in their defense of such Romish abominations as infant baptism the reform parties are nothing but the second beast which causes the people to worship the first beast (Revelation 13). All state churchism, continues our author, is the awful "abomination of desolation" predicted in holy writ; the state churches—whether Catholic or Protestant—are the "Babylon" of the Apocalypse, and from them the true Christians must withdraw. With this blunt demand for separation from organized Christendom the author closes his tract.

It should be noted that by "works saints" the author means Roman Catholics, while by "scribes" he means Protestant reformers. [Material inclosed in brackets was supplied by the translator to clarify the original.]



# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

Published quarterly by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference. Editors: John C. Wenger, Goshen, Indiana and Melvin Gingerich, North Newton, Kansas. Associate Editors: S. F. Coffman, H. S. Bender, J. B. Smith, C. Z. Mast, J. C. Clemens, Ira D. Landis, Paul Erb and H. A. Brunk. Office Editor: Paul Erb. Publication Office: Scottsdale, Pennsylvania.

Vol. VII

DECEMBER, 1946

No. 4

## Solomon B. Wenger

EDITH WENGER MORGAN

Solomon B., son of Jacob and Hannah Brenneman Wenger, was born on January 7, 1857, in a log cabin on a farm near Edom, Rockingham County, Virginia, in the famous Shenandoah Valley. He was just old enough to have vivid impressions and memories of the harrowing experiences of the Civil War when the Confederate Army took food from the Valley as their right, and the Union Army under Sheridan raided it as part of their strategy to starve the South into submission.

His early education was interfered with by the war and the strenuous years of reconstruction which followed it, so that he was never privileged to go to school very much, or with any regularity whatsoever. Yet his interest in learning was so keen, and his application so intense, that he acquired the works of an educated man; namely, the ability to read intelligently, speak correctly, think constructively, and write his thoughts cogently.

He was married in 1882 to Sallie Beery, a neighbor girl, and they migrated to South English, Iowa, where, on a farm, they established their happy home. But it was broken up the next year by the sudden death of his wife. In 1886 he was married to Belle Gruey, a teacher in the district school near which he was working. To this union were born Edith, Clark, Arthur, Emery, and Milo (of whom only the two eldest survived him.) Again death left him lonely by taking his companion in 1916. But the helpmate of his later years was Minnie Wampler Miller, who had been a neighbor girl on a farm adjoining his father's.

Reared in a profoundly religious home he early had convictions about being a Christian, but kept them to himself a good many years because, in that day, no one joined the church until he married and settled down. A vivid dream gave him the courage to announce his convictions, and, at his request, he was baptized and received into the Mennonite Church by Bishop Abe Shank at Brenneman's, the first unmarried man to be so received.

And from his devotion to the cause he that day publicly espoused, he never wavered. The evangelistic, publication, and educational interests of the Mennonite Church were very near to his heart, and he labored untiringly for their advancement, and for consistent conduct in the church membership. He wrote many articles for the church paper, expressing his concern.

The establishment of the Liberty Mennonite congregation near South English



S. B. Wenger  
1857-1941

was directly traceable to his sustained efforts. From the time when he first came there and found a few families of Mennonite ancestry, he had a sense of divine mission about this. Twice he became discouraged and tried to settle elsewhere, only to return more sure than before that here lay his field of labor. It was a source of deep satisfaction to him to see, as his reward, a congregation of more than one hundred members served by two ministers, Bro. Silas Horst and Bro. Perry Blosser, the latter a bishop.

Another cause about which he felt very fervently was that of temperance. He hated liquor with every shred of his being, and fought it with every power at his command: his conversation, his ballot, his pen. His articles were sometimes published in local weekly and daily papers.

Besides his interest in the moral and religious aspects of his community, he was always attempting to minister to its temporal needs as well. When the local apple crop was a failure, he saw to it that the community was supplied with the best that could be imported from Ohio or Virginia. Everywhere he went, as long as he lived, he planted fruit trees. A keen student of nature, he was never satisfied with mediocre results. His farm animals were thoroughbreds. He worked for years developing a new, more practical breed of chickens, the Rose-combed Barred Rocks, which received highest national recognition. And his work in improving strains of seed corn and producing it was widely known in his section.

(Continued on page 4)

## The Formation of the Iowa-Nebraska Conference

SIMON GINGERICH

The Amish Church in early America was patterned very much after the mother church of Europe. The congregation was the unit. Its ministry consisted of a deacon, a minister, and a bishop. The bishop was the highest official in his congregation. Much depended upon him as to the unity and peace in his congregation and also as to the relationship of his congregation to the rest of the church. There was no over-all organization, such as a conference, as we now have them.

America with its broad expanse of undeveloped and unoccupied lands together with its religious liberties became a fertile field for these honest, energetic, industrious people. The nineteenth century brought to America an epoch of progress perhaps never surpassed by any country—new inventions, new means of transportation and communication, new industries, and laborsaving machinery, all of which became the constant concern of the Amish bishop of this age. He must be on guard constantly so as not to allow the world to make inroads of worldliness into his church. Separation from the world according to Amish interpretation meant wearing a prescribed cut and style of clothing for both sexes, plain from head to foot; prescribed mode of haircut and the wearing of the lone beard for men; certain vehicles forbidden; and photographs and pictures on the walls not allowed. These and many others together with the regular scriptural injunctions of separation from the world in varied applications laid the ground floor of much dissatisfaction among the brotherhood and often among the ministry of the church.

For the purpose of maintaining the unity of the church and establishing peace, Ministers' Meetings were called and Counsel Meetings were held. These meetings proved to be futile so far as establishing unity in the church as a whole was concerned. However, they did have the effect of dividing the Amish Church into two distinct groups. The more conservative group who chose to abide by the traditions of their forefathers became known as the "Old Order Amish" and the more progressive element as the "Amish Mennonites."

While this transition period of the Amish Church was going on in America, the Mennonite Church had also spread from the East to the Middle West. The



spread of the Mennonite Church and that of the Amish Mennonite and Old Order Amish from Pennsylvania to the Pacific Coast was almost simultaneous. These churches, fundamentally, shared a common faith. Their differences lay chiefly in the application to life of their Christian principles. Often church organizations of all three were found in the same community. The Mennonites seemed to lead in general organization. They formed new conference districts as their church spread from east to west. The Amish Mennonites followed in their wake and by the year 1890 had established conference districts from Pennsylvania to the Pacific Coast. The district embracing Ohio and Pennsylvania finally became known as the Eastern Amish Mennonite Conference. The district containing the states of Indiana and Michigan was known as the Indiana-Michigan Amish Mennonite Conference. The district west of Indiana was known as the Western Amish Mennonite Conference and included all states west of the Indiana line to the Pacific Coast.

The two decades extending from 1880 to 1900 mark an epoch in Amish Mennonite and Mennonite history. The German language was gradually being superseded by the English in Sunday school and church services; evangelists arose from among the ministry; evangelistic meetings were held; Sunday School Conferences were introduced; a church school was opened; the Mennonite Evangelizing and Benevolent Board was organized; the Mennonite Publishing Company came into being; church papers, the "Herold der Wahrheit" in German and the "Herald of Truth" in English, were published; a Mennonite Book and Tract Society was formed; mission stations were opened; and foreign mission work was undertaken.

While the above-named activities originated mostly in Indiana and Ohio, many of them were of a church-wide nature and found a ready response in the minds of influential church leaders of both the Mennonites and Amish Mennonites. As the above agencies began to function, there was in the minds of some a need for an over-all organization which would function as a unifying and spiritually edifying agency for the several conferences eligible for membership. The result of this thinking came to the forefront when a preliminary meeting was held at Elida, Ohio, in November of 1897. At this meeting both Mennonites and Amish Mennonites participated in the deliberations, and arrangements were made for a permanent organization known as the Mennonite General Conference, which is functioning to date (1946). It is true that many brethren of that day scanned the above-named organizations and activities with critical eyes. However, it is also true that brethren from both the above-named groups were found together on the different Boards and activities, and the financial support for the institutions came from both branches of the church. The differences that once obtained were all but obliterated.

As stated above, the Western Amish Mennonite Conference extended from the western boundary of Indiana to the Pacific Coast. Covering the same territory, the Mennonite Church had four conference districts; viz., Illinois, Missouri-Iowa, Kansas-Nebraska, and Pacific Coast. Occasional mention was made of a possible merging with the Mennonite conference districts. At this some of the Amish Mennonite brethren winked. This was due to the fact that in a few instances Mennonite congregations were organized in the Western Amish Mennonite conference district composed of dissatisfied members of the Amish Mennonite Church. However, as time went on many young men were ordained to the ministry to take the place of those who had passed on, which reduced this obstacle. Conference privileges were freely exchanged between the two groups. It was at the Western District Amish Mennonite Conference held October 15 and 16, 1919, at the Sycamore Grove Church near Garden City, Missouri, that the following question was discussed: "Does this conference favor the merging and redistricting of our western district?"

The answer was: "Resolved that we look with favor upon such action, provided it can be done satisfactory to our membership. To this end we favor the appointment of twelve brethren who are to confer with similar committees appointed by the other conferences; that they investigate the question and the issues involved and bring their report to the next meeting of the conference for further consideration and action."

The following is a copy of the report with recommendations which was presented to each congregation in the conference districts affected by the merger:

For a number of years the members of the Western Amish Mennonite Conference have felt that their district covered too much territory to do the best work. Several efforts to divide the district failed. In the meantime there developed a Christian fellowship between the members of this district and members of sister conferences, and for a number of years they have ardently labored together in mission boards, in Bible Conferences, in evangelistic efforts, in General Conference, and in other important church work; using the same Confession of Faith as their creed, being one in faith and practice. After making a study of original differences which caused separate organizations, and finding that these differences are practically eliminated, many of our brethren have looked forward hopefully to the time when there will be a merging of conferences. This matter having been prayerfully considered by these various conferences, it was thought wise to appoint a committee of twenty-four brethren—twelve from the Western Amish Mennonite Conference, and three from each of the following Mennonite conferences: Illinois, Missouri-Iowa, Kansas-Nebraska, Pacific Coast.

Wherefore we, as a joint committee, in session at East Fairview Church near Milford, Nebraska, May 26 and 27, 1920, having been appointed by our respective

conferences to examine into the advisability of effecting a merger of the above-named conferences and report our findings to our conferences, recommend the following:

1. That the present conference regulations and disciplines remain in effect until the new organizations are effected.

2. That the official standing of bishops, ministers, and deacons shall not be affected by the merging of conferences, but that their jurisdiction may be determined by the new organizations.

3. That the members be allowed the privilege of continuing their present church home with their respective congregations.

4. That the congregations located in the following described geographical sections be considered as new conference districts:

Section No. 1.—Illinois.

Section No. 2.—Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, including the congregation located at Thurman, Colorado.

Section No. 3.—Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Southern Colorado, Texas, Louisiana.

Section No. 4.—Idaho, Oregon, California, including the congregation located at Creston, Montana.

Section No. 5.—North Dakota, Montana, South Dakota, Manitoba—with the understanding that each of the conferences in the other sections named send one delegate to the annual conference in this section.

5. That this report be presented by the bishops in charge (or some one under their direction) to their several congregations for consideration, and that the members in each congregation register their voice by ballot, the results of which (together with such suggestions or recommendations as the church officials may wish to make) are to be sent to the Secretary of this committee.

After the Secretary had received all of the reports from the different congregations and tabulated them, the Chairman and Secretary with a few representative brethren from the Merger Committee met at the Amish Mennonite Church near Morton, Illinois, in September, 1920, at the time when the Western Amish Mennonite Conference was in session there, and prepared the following report to be presented to all the Western Conferences involved. This report was ratified by the whole committee. The following is a copy of this report with its recommendations:

We, the undersigned committee, appointed by our representative conferences to consider the advisability of merging and redistricting our western conferences and prepare a report for the consideration of these bodies, beg leave to submit the following:

At our meeting held at East Fairview Church near Milford, Nebraska, May 26 and 27, 1920, after prayerful consideration of the work before us, we prepared the following report for consideration by our congregations:

(See former Report)

The above was submitted to the various congregations throughout the conference districts by the bishops in charge or by brethren under their direction. Of the sixty-four congregations reporting, thirty-



nine are recorded as unanimously in favor of the merging. In two congregations there were three votes recorded against, the rest in favor. The vote of the remaining twenty-three congregations was as follows: in favor, 1526; not in favor, 108; undecided, 13. This does not include members giving no expression. We are grateful to God that thus far His spirit has led and that there has been a marked support of the movement by all the conferences and a large majority of the membership throughout the districts. We hereby express the hope that by the time this work is completed it may have the united and hearty support of every member in our congregations.

With more than nine tenths of the entire vote cast being in favor of conference merging, and no serious objections against it being in evidence, we believe that the time has come when steps should be taken towards the merging and redistricting of our conferences and therefore recommend the following:

1. That our conferences be redistricted according to the recommendations of our former report.
2. That the official standing of bishops, ministers, and deacons remain the same as at present, and that their jurisdiction remain the same unless otherwise determined by the new organizations.
3. That our present conference disciplines remain in force until new ones are adopted to take their place.
4. That in the disciplines to be adopted by the new conferences no Gospel principle be dropped, and that no discipline be considered as finally adopted without the consent of the congregations of the district.
5. That in the formulating of conference disciplines there be an equal representation of the merging branches of the church in the formulating committees.
6. That the present church home of members be not affected by the merging of conferences.
7. That until the new conferences are organized the congregations continue under the present conference organizations.
8. That the present district mission boards continue the work under the present systems until other provisions are made by the new organizations.
9. That these new conferences be held sometime during the year 1921—provided that the recommendations herein submitted will be accepted by all the conferences or their authorized representatives prior to January 1, 1921.
10. That the following brethren be appointed as executive committees of their respective districts: *Illinois*: Samuel Gerber, J. S. Shoemaker, A. A. Shrock, A. C. Good, A. L. Buzzard, C. A. Hartzler. *Iowa-Nebraska*: S. C. Yoder, D. G. Lapp, P. J. Blosser, Simon Gingerich, J. E. Zimmerman, C. J. Garber. *Kansas-Missouri*: J. M. Kreider, I. G. Hartzler, P. J. Shenk, J. J. Zimmerman, J. A. Heatwole, C. D. Yoder, L. J. Miller, John Slagel. *Pacific Coast*: S. G. Shetler, A. P. Troyer, C. R. Gerig, J. P. Bontrager, M. E. Brenneman, Fred Gingerich. *North Dakota*: I. S. Mast, L. A. Kauffman, Joe C. Gingerich.
11. That it be the duty of these executive committees to designate the time and place of holding the first conference in their respective districts, to provide for the necessary programs, and to organize the conferences—the chairman of

each executive committee to be the temporary moderator of the conference.

12. That the official names of the conferences be determined by the conferences themselves.

13. That the existing conferences be considered dissolved as soon as the new ones are organized and that the term of office of all conference officials and appointees expire with the dissolution of their respective conferences or when others are elected or appointed to take their place.

14. That each conference of the districts affected make provisions for the closing of its business and records when the new conferences have been organized and that the action thus taken become a part of the regular conference records, a complete set or copy of which shall be forwarded to the chairman of the historical committee of General Conference.

15. That this report be presented to the different conferences or their authorized representatives for action, the results of which shall be forwarded to the chairman of this committee.

16. That the work of the joint conference merger committee be considered completed when its report has been accepted by the different conferences or their authorized representatives, and the new conferences organized, after which time the committee shall be considered dissolved.

With a prayer that God may continue to direct in this important work and that all our congregations may prosper in faithful, zealous Christian service, we submit this report for your prayerful consideration.

Yours for the cause of Christ and the welfare of the church.

All the conferences affected by the proposed merger passed favorably on the above reports and adopted the recommendations, and the new districts were organized as provided for and each held its first session during the year 1921.

When the Iowa-Nebraska district formulated its constitution the question of a proper name came to the forefront. During the discussion that followed it soon became evident that the term "Mennonite" was objectionable to some on the ground that there were but three congregations within the district which formerly belonged to the Mennonite Church while there were fourteen which had belonged to the Amish Mennonite branch. After a friendly discussion it was decided to drop the word "Mennonite" from the name and the name Iowa-Nebraska Conference was adopted. This body meets annually the first week in September, the present (1946) moderator being P. J. Blosser, South English, Iowa. It is a member of General Conference and appoints regularly its representatives on the Publication Board, the Mennonite Board of Education, and the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities. It is composed of twenty congregations with a total membership of 3,892. Its ministry consists of nine bishops, twelve deacons, and twenty-two ministers. The Iowa City Mission is solely under its jurisdiction. The Kansas City Mission and the Chil-

dren's Home in Kansas City are supported and operated conjointly with the Missouri-Kansas Conference. Wayland, Iowa.

## The Mennonite Aid Plan of Iowa

L. GLEN GUENGERICH

The history of the Mennonite Aid Plan of Iowa begins humbly, runs through three decades of time, reflects the religious and economic spirit of its day, and continues with the promise of still serving its original purpose well.

In 1882 a church conference held at Wakarusa, Indiana, gave permission for the formation of a Mennonite mutual aid society. Following this action, the "Mennonite Aid Plan" was organized. The organizers declared: "We do not regard this plan as an insurance company, though it secures to the brethren who participate in it, the same benefits. It is simply a system through which the church is enabled more fully to carry out the apostolic admonition, 'Bear ye one another's burdens.' We trust that this plan may be the means of good; that . . . no one may be weakened in the faith . . . that . . . the entire brotherhood may be encouraged to a deeper love and stronger sympathy for one another and to give cheerfully and systematically when losses occur . . ." At least eight states felt the influence of this Aid Plan including Iowa.

Three years later the first plan of this type originating in Iowa was organized in Johnson County during the summer of 1885. The Amish Mennonites established an aid society composed only of its members. It adopted seven simple rules; more perhaps was understood and taken for granted than was stated in the document. Obviously, this aid society did not serve all the Mennonites in the community for very long; by 1889 the "Old" Mennonites built their first church in Johnson County. Since the membership of the latter was made up mostly of former members of the Old Order Amish churches, they were therefore, as far as an aid plan is concerned, orphans.

Therefore, the Mennonite Aid Plan of Iowa was born—figuratively, the grandchild of the 1882 Indiana Aid Plan and the orphan of the 1885 Amish Aid Society of Iowa.

On August 30, 1913, a committee of nine men representing the East Union, West Union, and Lower Deer Creek churches "met at the home of Will H. Miller for the purpose of forming some plan by which members of the Mennonite and Amish Mennonite churches might assist each other in a systematic way in case of loss by fire or lightning." After the meeting was called to order Sam Bender was appointed chairman of the meeting and Joe C. Brenneman, secretary. There was a lengthy discussion. It was emphasized that the giving aspect of the plan must be cultivated among the members rather than mere remuneration of losses incurred. "After a number of articles were adopted from another con-



gregation [i.e., the Mennonite Aid Plan of 1882] and other articles added, the committee adjourned with the understanding that the plan which was now formed was to be made known to the members of the different congregations subject to further additional articles or changes of what was already formed."

"On September 27, the same committee met again . . . to more completely adopt or amend the work which had been done, and to exchange thoughts and make known the opinion that was prevailing throughout and among the people." The same committee made arrangements to call a general meeting at the Lower Deer Creek Church on October 11. On that date the church was filled, and a lively discussion took place as the proposed regulations were read one by one and adopted. The first officers were then elected. John B. Miller was elected moderator for one year, Joe C. Brenneman, secretary, and S. M. Bender, Joel D. Reber, and J. A. Boller, valuator for five years each. It was decided to call this organization "The Mennonite Aid Plan of Iowa, Johnson, and Washington Counties." "Later, the same year, the Sugar Creek Church of Henry County chose Joe Nebel as their first valuator.

The organization held annual meetings after that date, generally on the first Saturday in September, in which officers were elected and rules modified or changed to meet new conditions. Executive meetings were also called at certain intervals when it was necessary to transact urgent business, such as deciding what the amount of the assessment should be; to borrow small sums of money in cases of deficit; to draw up tentative amendments for discussion at the annual meeting; to set the date for the annual meeting in case a conflict occurred such as with conference meetings, inclement weather; and to discuss other routine problems.

In the early years of its operation members sometimes good-naturedly inquired whether the plan was still in operation since there were sometimes rather long intervals when they heard nothing from its officers. Even though this Aid Plan served quietly, its work was effective. It was not incorporated or legally licensed to function but also no law forbade its operation. But nevertheless efforts are being made at the present time to give it a legal status with the state of Iowa, thereby causing no business embarrassments. A. C. Gingerich of Wellman has been delegated to contact the proper officials.

The Mennonite Aid Plan has never been in court as claimant or defendant but was subpoenaed once as witness in a case where a member was charged with being negligent in paying his dues. A mortgage moratorium had been declared and the mortgagee of one of the members wanted to bring evidence that this particular person was negligent in paying his dues and if this could be proved, foreclosure proceedings could begin. The secretary-treasurer, D. B. Swartzendruber, was subpoenaed to appear in court. He was able to show by the books that the dues were always paid, but several times

a little late. The foreclosure was not allowed by the court.

There are a number of signs which show that this Aid Plan has been "growing" up. At first, assessments were levied merely as the needs arose; later, enough to have on hand \$2,000.00 annually; then \$5,000.00; now \$10,000.00; indications are that the next levy might bring it to \$15,000.00. Unusual and capricious problems presented themselves. Shall we permit a member to list bees which he keeps in his cellar in the wintertime? Shall we pay for an electric motor in a cellar which was burned out and lightning was claimed to be the cause? But one of the biggest "growing pains" in ten years was the conclusion reached in 1942 to list business places, feed mills, custom garages, broodre houses, and woodworking shops, and the assessment and enlistment fees were to be three times the rate of the regular assessment. The listing for none of these was to exceed \$6,000.00.

In September, 1931 the Aid Plan "became of age," when it cast off its lengthy name and became "The Mennonite Aid Plan of Iowa." Formerly it had been changed to "The Mennonite Aid Plan of Iowa, Johnson, and Washington Counties and Also Other Counties in Iowa." In 1943 the name of "moderator" was changed to that of "president."

The officers of this organization have served without a salary—only their expenses are paid. Occasionally, at the annual business meeting, for some long or devoted service, a modest donation is given to some member. Since 1913 there have been but three presidents, viz., John B. Miller (1913-1921), J. A. Boller (1921-1945), and D. B. Swartzendruber (1945 to the present). The present secretary-treasurer is Herman Yoder of Kalona. Many others have served long and devotedly in various capacities.

Growth of this aid society is even more conspicuous when we notice a few figures. In 1921 the value of property listed stood at \$1,307,687; in 1938 it was \$3,307,496; today it stands at over \$5,225,000.

However, neither an efficient organization nor outstanding service of its personnel nor millions of dollars can assure prosperity to any mutual aid system of this type. But rather the sustaining force comes from an infinitely Higher Power through which its individual members draw an abounding faith to insure its unqualified success. Kalona, Iowa.

#### SOLOMON B. WENGER

(Continued from page 1)

His interest in the profits he should have had from these efforts was always secondary to the good he might do. He had a passion for helping people, and would go out of his way any day for that purpose. He was generous to a fault. He gave away far more than he could afford to do.

Small of stature, he had an unusual capacity for hard work, such as digging tile ditches, stacking straw, and chopping wood. He built his strawstacks, and scorned a poor one. He cut his own firewood till he was past eighty-two years old,

walking to the timber and back, and carrying his dinner pail. His worn-down ax as he left it, is a mute witness.

One of his most outstanding traits of character was adhering to a principle he believed in regardless of cost or opposition. He refused to sell seed corn on Sunday to a customer who drove a team of horses many miles to get it, offering him free entertainment until Monday morning. He voted the Prohibition ticket for fifteen years when his was the only such ballot cast in his precinct, and although many Mennonite leaders disapproved of voting. One time he was on a committee of five appointed to locate a certain church institution. He disagreed with the other four as to the location they should recommend, and could not be persuaded to change his vote so that the report might be unanimous. When they went to dinner, one of the committee jokingly proposed that they order dinner for four and hay for one. But years later they conceded his judgment better than theirs.

In contrast with his sense of humor was his capacity for suffering, in which he resembled his mother. The sorrows of his own life and those of others weighted him down almost to despondency. These, too, he could never forget, nor escape their poignancy.

He was extremely tenderhearted and sympathetic. He couldn't endure that pain or injury should be inflicted upon any creature. He never aimed a gun nor wanted his boys to hunt. He was solicitous for the comfort of his dog, which repaid him with constant and unflinching devotion, and of the horses which had served him long and faithfully.

And, of course, he was also solicitous for the comfort and happiness of his family. He could not bear for them to want anything he could provide. Once he made a special trip to town to buy a toy horse because his small son had seen it in a store window and had his heart set upon it. He secured for his family the best he could obtain in comfortable clothing, in medical and dental care, and in schooling.

This quotation from my little book, "Stories My Father Told Us," which gives a more detailed account of his life than is possible in the space of this short article, will sum up his influence as I estimate it five years after his death:

"He spoke scarcely a word in public. His religion was a thing to be lived, rather than talked about. But his teaching to his family was positive and persistent. . . .

"He taught: us all our lives to love the truth; to honor God and to respect the church; to make everybody happy if we could; to always do our nearest duty first."

And his choice of a text for his funeral service is his own closing testimony:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. . . ."

His death occurred October 10, 1941.

Rubio, Iowa.